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OF

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

GEORGE EASTON,

ONE OF THE AGENTS OF THE SCOTTISH TEMPERANCE LEAGUE.

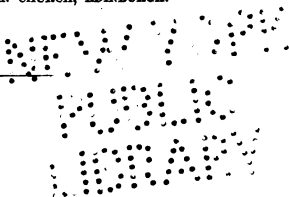
WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY THE

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REV. WILLIAM REID,

OF LOTHIAN ROAD UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, EDINBURGH.

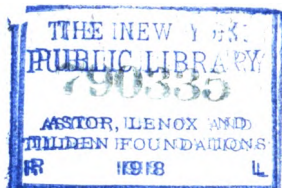


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INTRODUCTION.

GEORGE EASTON requires no one's letters of commendation, his praise being already in every town and village of Scotland; but I being one of those numerous friends who had requested him to publish an account of himself, I am only too happy to have my name thus associated with his own. Indeed, I know not but that it was I who first of all suggested to him the idea of giving to the world his autobiography. Several years ago, when I was editor of *The Abstinence Journal*, I solicited of him a brief sketch of his life, which appeared in its pages; and more recently I strongly urged him to prepare the accompanying work. The reader will, I doubt not, abundantly justify the advice which I gave him; and my conviction is, that such a work is much more likely to promote the temperance cause than the most skilfully-constructed and best-told Temperance Prize Tale. I never had much confidence in fiction as a means of promoting the cause of truth, but I have great confidence in authentic narrative, when well told, going not only to the hearts but to the consciences of those who may read; and as few men know better than George Easton the evils of intemperance and the principles and operations of the temperance

A

movement, and fewer still possess in the same degree the gift of reproducing in print their thoughts and feelings, I regard the accompanying autobiography as George Easton, the temperance advocate, multiplied a thousand-fold ; and those who know what he is, must admit that that is no small boon to the temperance cause.

While an autobiography has certain advantages over a memoir, as each man may be supposed to know best his own life, yet it has disadvantages too. The best men shrink from a narration of those personal qualities which make the publication of their life desirable, and hence it is not out of place if I should say of Mr. Easton what he would be the last to say of himself, and which yet is needful to be known to give a stranger a full portrait of the man. We value a likeness of a friend, inasmuch as it stands true to our most favourable impressions of the original. I shall then but give those touches which are necessary to impart character and completion to the picture.

Most unlike the generality of those clever men who, by dint of superior talent, have risen from the lower ranks to public notice, he speaks little of himself or of his doings, and can award to his fellow-labourers the merit which is their due, without fear of thereby being deprived of a just appreciation of his own ; but for the solicitation of friends, he would never, I suspect, have soiled his fingers with printer's ink. Of a genial, generous, child-like nature, he is not more loved for his intellectual superiority than for his moral qualities. Indeed, in heart and head, bodily presence, and frank

disposition, he is an apt representative of a cause which is the embodiment of inborn vigour, sound practical sense, and good-will to all men. Shrewdness, humour, untiring energy, and enthusiasm which never flags, go to make up his character; while a shake of his hand will go as far as most men's oath in assuring you of his sincerity. George Easton, in our estimation, combines in a very high degree all the qualifications required for the office which he has so long and so honourably filled. He knows by experience something of the miseries of dissipation and the devices of the publican. Having sprung from the working-classes, he can sympathize with them in their difficulties; prove to them that even hard-working men are stronger and happier without liquor than with it; and that their drinking habits are the greatest barrier to their social, moral, and intellectual progress. Possessed of a mind of no common grasp, superior oratorical gifts, and a happy power of illustration, he is able to present the question of which he treats in its most striking and attractive form. Added to this is his deep religious feeling and simple piety, by which he imbues his argument with those elements which most powerfully affect us. It has been my happiness frequently to listen to his addresses, and I cannot conceive of anything better fitted to convey conviction to the minds of an audience. His religious addresses especially I have regarded as fitted to be pre-eminently useful. We have witnessed him conduct an entire Sabbath evening service with a propriety and power which has commanded the admiration of all who were privileged to be present. Indeed, we have

said on returning from such a service, held in our metropolitan city, with not more than 300 or 400 of an audience, when thousands were in the same city running after some "converted sweep," or "Christianized flesher," that if he would only condescend to some like clap-trap cognomination, he would leave all competitors far in the distance. But Mr. Easton has too much honest contempt for such devices, and too much respect for himself and his work to gain a fictitious popularity by means so unworthy. The following pages abundantly show that in sound, healthful interest, his life has not been a whit behind the very chiefest of them ; besides, a long and honourable course of most beneficial public services gives him a strong claim on the attention and regard of all who wish well to their fellow-men. But while disclaiming all unworthy methods of securing notoriety, his public appearances constitute an exhibition of no ordinary interest. It is not every day we meet a man untrained in school or college, treating of the more recondite aspects of the temperance question in a manner fitted to command the attention of even the thoughtful and refined. Of his published discourses we refer in proof of what we say to his sermon on the miracle at Cana. A more ingenious, interesting, and satisfactory discussion of that incident in our Lord's history we have nowhere met with. Conceive, then, of that discourse delivered without notes, by a big, burly, frank, fluent Scotchman—a man of some six feet high—and of commanding bearing and strong vernacular—a man who looks and speaks as if he could cry over sorrow, and laugh right heartily too—a man

who in tone and gesture suits the action to the word better than most who try it. Conceive of such a man so engaged, and those who have never seen or heard George Easton may have some idea of his advocacy.

The office to which, in the providence of God, he has been called, is one altogether peculiar. No other public movement, so far as we know, has a like staff of duly-qualified lecturers travelling the country, and night after night, the whole year through, in village and clachan, town and city, to audiences varying from a score to a thousand, expounding and enforcing its principles. Such is the vocation of the League agents. Some dozen men, carefully selected—men of high Christian character and superior talents—men who, like George Easton, have, by years of gratuitous and unwearied advocacy of the cause in their various localities earned for themselves a good degree, have been solicited to relinquish their respective callings, and devote their entire time to temperance advocacy. By this means interest in the movement is sustained, the zeal of adherents promoted, new societies formed, and old ones revived. Such is the agency of the Scottish Temperance League; and an institution which employs such an agency is worthy of most liberal countenance and support.

Nor can we too earnestly bespeak the kind consideration of the various committees throughout the land on behalf of those devoted men. Let it be remembered that they are men chosen because of their approved fitness for the work; that for it they forego family enjoyments and the ease and comfort of a per-

manent abode; that they are expected to fire with new zeal each society as it is visited in turn, secure contributions from sometimes reluctant abstainers, travel long journeys on foot where no regular conveyance is to be had, and then, often worn and weary, appear bright and hopeful before a somewhat unsympathetic audience.

When all this is taken into consideration, office-bearers will, I am sure, accord them, on their visits, a cordial greeting, and, in so far as they have the ability, render their labours pleasant and successful. Little, I apprehend, can now be complained of by those who embark in the temperance advocacy; but the day was when scrimp fare and little thanks were all the cheer that was awarded. Well do I still remember my own experience in the early days of the movement. Let a single instance suffice:—Having, one winter's night, with a fellow-student, travelled on the top of a coach some ten miles, to a neighbouring town, to address a temperance meeting, we reached the president's house cold and weary, to be shown through the kitchen, where lay the children ill of scarlet fever, to an adjoining room, without fire, where tea was served. The cinnamon flavour of that wretched tea haunts me yet. An hour intervening before the time of meeting, we vigorously attempted, by means of forced marches, to get up a heat, but all in vain; and then, in a dreary church, lighted, or rather bedimmed, by some half-dozen candles, we endeavoured, by speaking twenty minutes alternately for full two hours, and speaking with a birr strangely in contrast with the apparent

apathy of our scant and half-visible audience, to generate caloric in our shivering frames ; and then back again to the president's parlour, the table of which now presented a moderate supply of oatmeal cakes, cheese, and cold water, and of which we were invited to partake, with the encouraging preface, "It's a gran' thing, this teetotal ; nae need o' warm suppers noo ;" and then some two hours' converse of the secretary, a pious Methodist, who narrated how he knelt alone and in the dark by the road side, praying for success to the temperance cause ; but who at midnight shrank from accompanying us to the hotel door, the only house where a bed could be got, lest the inmates should sneer at his abstinence ; and then the discomfort of a damp bed ; back to the president's in the morning, to be regaled as aforesaid ; and finally rewarded for our gratuitous services by the announcement that "oor committee only pay to speakers the steerage fare !" the upshot of the whole being that we returned home—no uncommon thing, at least then—some few shillings out of pocket, and I, to boot, with a cough which kept by me for some half-dozen years after.

Such experience may now be rare ; but let one who has no selfish or personal end to serve beseech our office-bearers to make the comfort of our agents no secondary aim. Depend upon it, by doing so, not only will kindness be shown to a most worthy class, but help will be afforded to one of the best of causes. A glad heart is needful to make even a good man strong for duty. Had I the ears of my fellow-abstainers throughout the land, I would say to

them, Attend personally, and get others to attend, the meetings of our advocates; although they may have little new to tell you, the sustaining of interest and the deepening of old impressions are as important as the reception of new arguments. By all means, make their visits agreeable to themselves and profitable to the cause. Welcome them when they arrive, and don't grudge them their expenses when they depart. Blessing on those many good and true men, local leaders of our movement throughout the land, who give not only to George Easton, but to all his colleagues, a right hearty welcome, and a farewell which seems to say, "Ye cannot come too soon back again !"

WILLIAM REID.

MERCHISTON PARK,
EDINBURGH, *22d November, 1865.*

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF GEORGE EASTON.

IN laying before my numerous friends, at the request of a few of them, a brief account of my life in connection with the Temperance Movement, I do not feel that any apology is necessary; as it is chiefly for the purpose of having an opportunity of defending the principles upon which the movement is based, and of illustrating the benefits it is fitted to confer, that I have undertaken the task. Indeed, apart from the temperance movement, there is nothing in my history of deeper interest than may be found in that of the great majority of mankind.

Like most other men born in humble life, I can say very little of my progenitors. In these circumstances the reflection is somewhat consoling, that I am certainly descended from the great progenitors of the race, and can therefore claim connection with as ancient a family as any king, lord, or duke on the face of the earth. Had there been, over and above the ordinary ties of nature, a substantial chain of the precious metal, ornamented with costly diamonds, binding my forefathers to one another, it is more than probable I would have been able to trace them back many generations; but

the fact that I cannot go back more than two is a very satisfactory proof that no such chain ever existed. Well, be it so,—

“A man’s a man for a’ that.”

But to my narrative. My grandfather and mother, on my father’s side, were natives of Selkirkshire. Neither of these had I ever the pleasure of seeing. My respected father, James Easton, the eldest of a family of seven, was engaged about 1790 by Sir Charles Malcolm, Burnfoot, parish of Westerkirk, as his body servant. After leaving Sir Charles he served for some time with the Rev. John Little, of the same parish, and in 1795 he engaged with Mr. John Moffat, Midknock, with whom he served thirteen years. My maternal grandfather and mother—Fergus Murray and Catherine Ballantyne—occupied a small farm called Riddings, on the south bank of the Liddle, near Longtown, and succeeded in bringing up thirteen of a family, of whom my mother was the eldest. At the time my father engaged with Mr. Moffat my mother was serving at Enzieholm, a neighbouring farm to Midknock. A very trifling incident was the cause of an intimacy being formed between them, which, in 1806, resulted in their marriage. A small thatched cottage, that still stands by the roadside, a short way from the farm-house of Midknock, was built for them, and there they began to realize a married life, with all its sweets and bitters, its sunshine and shade. On the 2d of September, 1808, I was introduced into this world of good and evil. How it has fared with me since, the sequel of this story will to some extent disclose.

The reader will bear with me while I mention a few early recollections. Among the earliest of these is my running to meet the tailor when he came to make my first suit, and having done so, of his giving me a halfpenny to handsel my pocket. A proud little fellow I was when I doffed the petticoats and donned the jacket and trowsers, and turned over my first bawbee in my first pocket. Well do I remember, too, of the watch and clockmaker coming now and again and performing what to me at that time was a mysterious operation—taking down, cleaning, and again setting up an old eight-day clock, which had been the property of the “Johnstons of Westerhall,” and which my father had purchased at a public sale for thirty shillings. This old clock indicated time to our family for more than twenty-five years, when my brother Fergus put a more gaudy one in its place, but one that did not more correctly do the duty of a clock. I have often regretted parting with it. It would have almost immortalized a man’s name to have presented it to an antiquarian museum.

My recollection is more distinct than pleasant of the scarcity and consequent high price of oatmeal. Well do I remember that the supply in our family (though a family of not more than five members) was not equal to the demand, and that when porridge was not forthcoming, my father brought home a quantity of white pease-meal, which, in the emergency, had been introduced into the parish. With intense interest and hungry impatience, along with my brother James, I watched our mother proceed with the process

of baking, and with great relish we partook of the coarse fare before it was half cooked, asking no questions about milk, cheese, or anything else. Better and sweeter bread than that bannock I have never met with since; but I suppose hunger was good kitchen.

Another incident which I recollect, and which must have happened about the same time as the advent of the white pease-meal, was in connection with drink, at whose shrine the good folks of Westerkirk at that time all more or less, and many of them most assiduously, paid their devotions. A person of the name of John Little, who resided half a mile from our cottage, sold drink and drapery, and for the accommodation of his customers kept a back parlour. John one night came to our cottage window after we had retired to rest, and began playing on a fiddle, in order to awake the old man, my father, that he might get him away to join some party carousing in his back shop. Unfortunately (as some no doubt thought), the noise produced by the fiddle was no respecter of persons, for it awoke both old and young. Having guessed the drift of the proceedings, I leaped from my bed, and was first ready for the road. My father remonstrated, but it was of no use; to the public-house I would go. My mother had perhaps her own reasons for not interfering, and my father was no hand with the rod, so I was allowed to have my own way, and off I went at dead of night, in company with my father and the spirit-dealer, to pay my first (would that it had been my last!) visit to the public-house. On our arrival we received from two men a hearty whisky welcome. All the four set to drinking with hearty

good-will, and before long were getting "fou and unco happy." "The night drave on wi' sangs and clatter." Indeed, the greater part of it was spent in trying who could sing a Jacobite song best. The song I have never heard since, and never saw in print, but hearing it so often repeated that evening, two lines, along with the chorus, were so impressed upon my mind, that they have never been forgotten, and were as follows:—

"Satan sits in his dark neuk,
Riving sticks to roast the duke.
Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie;
Charlie he'll be here himself,
My bonnie Highland laddie."

The novelty of the scene was sufficient to keep me pretty lively till far on in the morning, when, in defiance of the noise, sleep threatened to fold me in its embrace. One of the company observing this, filled a wine glass with whisky punch, and requested me to drink it off, assuring me it would do me good. Believing the man to be speaking the truth, and thinking what was good for the old could not be bad for the young, I turned up my little finger, when the gentleman who was so attentive to my fancied wants clapped me on the head, and looking to my father, said,—“Ha, Jamie, this boy of yours will be a man yet!” Such teaching as the above is every way adapted to cause the boy to turn out the drunken man. When we consider the early, extensive, very liberal education in drinking given the young then, and even yet, we need not wonder that so many turn

out drunkards, but rather that so many escape. There can be very little doubt that, but for the counteracting of other and better educational influences, drink would long before this have done for us what it has all but completed for the Red Indian tribes. At six years of age my first visit to the public-house had been made; and shortly after my first visit to the parish school was resolved upon. All preliminary arrangements having been made for the event, with "Reading Made Easy," and a *peat* below my arm, my mother one Monday morning led me away, imparting many a sage advice as to how I should conduct myself. When we reached our destination, before being introduced to Mr. Graham, who was to try and teach my young ideas how to shoot, Mrs. Graham and my mother had to enjoy a long *crack* about various odds and ends. While this chat was going on I went out upon a voyage of discovery, and in my rambles landed close to the school, when a noise saluted my ears that caused me to run right home, never once stopping by the way.

The *tête-à-tête* being ended, I was wanted, but of course could not be found. My mother got quite alarmed, and after an anxious but fruitless search in the neighbourhood of the school, she returned home, and, to her great relief, found me sitting on the doorstep. My first lesson at school was thus one of retreating. In the evening a consultation was held, when it was unanimously resolved that I was too young to go to school, and a year's respite was granted, during which time, through the kind attention of my mother, I had made such progress that on my next visit to

school I could read the New Testament pretty fluently. The two principal things which appear to have made the most abiding impression on my mind while attending the parish school of Westerkirk were the severe floggings the rebellious received, and the Saturday examinations in the *Shorter Catechism*. What a terror these were! The mere name or sight of the *Catechism* frightened me at that time.

In the year 1816, my father having engaged with Thomas Beattie, Esq., Meikledeal, we left Westerkirk, and took up our abode in the parish of Ewes. I then began to herd cows in summer, and attend school during winter, a very common plan, but one which, if possible, should be avoided, as what of education is gained in winter is all but lost in summer. Like most boys, I was passionately fond of the game of foot-ball, and on one occasion, when about to give the *hailing-kick*, my foot slipped, and, falling upon a stone, I received a cut right across my left knee, that laid me aside from school for more than two months. My education, however, did not cease. Next door there lived an aged woman—"grannie" we always called her—who was emphatically a book-worm, as fond of literature as any boy could be of foot-ball, but who was nearly blind. For her own gratification she embraced the opportunity of turning my misfortune to account. Throughout my confinement she kept me reading at least six hours a day. For the first fortnight grannie was the very pest of my life. She would not accept a "nay say." Coaxing and hiring were had recourse to, to keep me reading.

Our stock of books was small, but we borrowed. We began with the *Gentle Shepherd*, and finished with Ralph Erskine's *Gospel Sonnets*; which fact of itself might be taken by some as indicative of progress in the right direction. At all events, during that confinement probably more benefit was received than had I been at school. What had previously been a task became a pleasure, and thus one good end was gained, for which let due thanks be awarded "grannie."

Being very fond of listening to public speaking, and esteeming an orator as of all men the one most to be envied, and having now acquired some taste for reading, I began to commit to memory extracts from various authors; then, when herding, I placed myself on some elevation, and, with the cows for my audience, repeated these with, I thought, great oratorical flourishes. If my auditors had been rational, rather than irrational creatures, they might have shown that they had a different estimate of my abilities. So much did my heart become set on being a public speaker, that one day I ventured to mention the subject to my father, and asked if he did not think it possible to secure me an education fitting me for being either a minister or play-actor. The answer was a peremptory order to be off to school, and an expression of amusement at my nonsense. Thus were the wings of my young aspirations clipped, and, although at the time much cast down, I had to submit. There is a saying to the effect that those who aspire after a silk gown are certain at least to get a sleeve. The education desired was never obtained, and therefore the climax of my youth-

ful ambition was never reached; but a fair share of public speaking was in store for me.

The principal part of my education was obtained at the parish school of Ewes, from Mr. John Little, whose school I attended for five or six winters, and whom I will ever continue to respect. He taught me in some measure to understand Gray's *Arithmetic*, Bonnycastle's *Mensuration*, and to read pretty accurately Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Pope's Homer's *Iliad*, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and to have by rote almost the whole of Barrie's *Collection*; but he never could succeed in enlightening my dull understanding as to *Grammar* and *Vulgar Fractions*. He never all that time whipped me but once; only, as he said long afterwards, that once was for ten thousand faults. Perhaps he was too lenient; and carelessness on the part of his pupil may in some measure account for the many shortcomings which, no doubt, may be discovered in this narrative. It is to be hoped none of these will be so great as to seriously offend the reader.

Up to the time of leaving school, though not without lessons in drinking, these had not been received in a public-house. There were three occasions, yearly, on which Laird and Lady Beattie treated all their retainers and friends to a jollification. The *Milkers' Dance*, which came off when ewe-milking concluded for the season; then *Harvest Home* or *Kirn*, followed by the *Spare-rib Feast*, which took place immediately after the fatted ox had been killed. On these occasions old and young drank; and when any got drunk it was

looked upon as a matter of course, and on the following day was made the subject of jest.

At Whitsunday, 1822, when nearly fourteen years old, I left school; and at Martinmas finished my course of cow-herding. The sagacity of dogs has been a theme about which much has been said and written. During my herding days a very extraordinary illustration of the wisdom of the dog came under my notice. Tups to the number of from twenty to thirty made their escape out of the enclosure at an improper season. Being the first to notice this in the morning, I gave information to the shepherd, who at once called his dogs, and away we all went to find out the place by which the animals had made their escape. This having been done, the shepherd, as if addressing a rational creature, told a dog named "Merry" that the tups had made their escape to the hill, and must be brought back. The dog at once left us, and went right up towards the summit of the hill near which we were standing. We went right up the glen, a distance of nearly four miles, till we reached the extreme boundaries of the farm, and after searching in various nooks and corners in vain, were on our way returning home when we observed "Merry," after a three hours' absence from us, coming down the mountain on the opposite side of the glen, driving the tups before it, not one awanting. How the dog had managed to extricate them from among the ewes was not easy to understand; but that it had done so there was no doubt. The fact that for three hours the dog had wrought to complete the task, with no person near to direct or assist

it, manifested a sagacity and wisdom little short of human.

But to return from this digression. Any man who would prefer to work with tools which did not, like horses, require to be cared for unless when being used, would never choose to earn his bread as a farm servant in preference to being a labourer, whose time, after performing his day's work, is much more at his own disposal. Cheerfully, therefore, did I accept the pick and shovel, instead of the horse and plough. The first work done for which day's wages were paid me was casting snow. My mother was a proud woman when one evening I put into her hand twenty shillings, with which she purchased a few shirts, that were always known in our family as the *snow-shirts*. While under the parental roof, I continued to hand all my earnings to my mother, to be disposed of as she thought proper—asking no questions.

At the age of fourteen years and a half I began work in earnest, with Mr. J. Jackson, contractor, who lived in the parish. Mr. Jackson was one of the most laborious men that ever lifted a tool: he also possessed in a high degree the capability of taking out of his men the greatest possible amount of work without losing their love and respect. Whether he considered it an act of justice or of grace may be doubtful, but, notwithstanding my youth and inexperience, he, from the commencement of my service, paid me the same amount of wages which he did full-grown men—nine shillings weekly—except during harvest, when it was

increased to twelve. There were those who grumbled at this; but his reply was,—“I’ll pay the boy what I please; you have nothing to do with that.” Thus encouraged, I needed no other stimulus, but cheerfully undertook and executed everything that could further his interests for five years. During that time many a lesson in drinking was mutually given and received. When anything particular occurred, such as beginning or finishing a job, our employer was very liberal with drink. To secure a right “*spree*” he considered that half a bottle of whisky for each man was necessary. Such a supply always led to one-half of us being drunk, and the other half pretty well on. There was one man who worked with us who had received a superior education, but who had, through drink, been reduced from a comfortable position in life to that of a common labourer. Of this man, books and whisky were the hobbies. When his purse was empty, he spent all his leisure hours in reading; when he had money, he was drinking or drunk. But for drink, he was a very quiet and inoffensive man. He was slavishly afraid of thunder. On one occasion he and another were sent to cut grass among the mountains, when it came on a severe thunder-storm. His companion afterwards very seriously remarked, that he did think that were it to thunder constantly, Mr. — would be a very good man, and never get drunk again. It was through the influence of this man that I became connected with a library of which he had been long a member. Four volumes a month were allowed each reader. The selection of books I left wholly to my friend, who, at

the expense of having to walk six, and sometimes eight miles, visited the library once a month, and got our books exchanged. As a general rule I managed to get through my four volumes, though nothing more, while he very frequently read both his own and mine. Whisky alone possessed the power of drawing him from his reading for a single night, and no man I have ever known suffered more after drinking than he. It appeared as if the more he suffered from drink his love for it became the more intense. This seemed strange then ; but it was a painful fact, which I have since often seen fearfully illustrated. Four volumes a month was extensive but very unprofitable reading for a man working hard nine hours a day. The most that can be said in its favour is, that it was not so bad as idleness, and a great deal better than drinking. Proper books carefully read and digested, a tenth part of the reading would not have been so laborious, and much more profitable in the end. Reader, if you want to see, so as to be able to describe a country, take your staff in hand and walk leisurely through it ; but if your ambition be merely to boast of how many parishes you have passed through in a given time, then go by an express train. In like manner, if you want to increase your knowledge, and profit by what you read, let the books be few and select, and make what they contain your own ; but if you desire merely to gratify a habit you have acquired, and to be able to boast of how many books you have read in a given time, then dash through them with express train velocity, and depend upon it, when you reach the

terminus, your knowledge of what you have read will be as little increased in the one case as your knowledge of the country in the other. Perhaps it would be too much to say that no benefit was secured by such reading; but of this I am conscious, that in reading the *Pilgrim's Progress* five or six times over, carefully, a deeper and more lasting impression of the characters and imagery of that great work was made upon my memory, than in reading all the *Waverley Novels* in the manner I did.

In the summer of 1826, along with a number of fellow-workers, I went to Northumberland and cut short corn for a pound a week and board; and in the winter of the same year I returned to school to get a little brushed up in mensuration, my aspirations soaring no higher *now* than being a road contractor. A short time after this a very close intimacy was formed between Mr. William Brown, road contractor, Hawick, and myself, which, in 1828, resulted in our entering into partnership. The *first* contract we had was a section of a road between Langholm and Newcastleton, and before we finished our *last*, we had learned what it was to fulfil such to the satisfaction of the *trustees* or their surveyor.

From employing ten or twenty men at first, we very frequently had sixty or eighty, so that, if we gained nothing else, we gained an accurate knowledge of the habits and modes of thinking in which such a class of working men indulge. No doubt we began work in right good earnest; and, as may be supposed, like most young men, built castles in the air that never became

habitable. For nearly eight years we wrought together, and, if the truth must be told, sometimes drank together, although my partner was more disposed to treat others than he was to drink himself. As illustrative of this, and at the same time of the great respect in which he held the Sabbath, the following incident may be cited:—A wedding party on one occasion was to be entertained on a Saturday afternoon at the farm-house where he was lodging. The farmer's wife was very much afraid that the Sabbath would be desecrated, and expressed her fears to Mr. Brown. After the two had duly consulted together, it was resolved that they would try and have all the men drunk and put to bed by eleven o'clock, and thus prevent them from desecrating the Sabbath. They managed their task, and thought they had done well! I never recollect seeing Mr. Brown what is called the worse of drink; would that he could say as much for the writer! Looking back upon the time we wrought together, while it presents much fitted to cause regret, it shows also many lessons taught me, which have been of great value since I became identified with the Temperance enterprise. To some of these I may be permitted to refer before closing this narrative.

In 1829 I was an interested party in one of those incidents which demonstrate the truth of the scientific principles of the movement, though at the time I did not see it in that light. The River Ewes was threatening, in mid-winter, to sweep away part of the public highway. This could not be permitted; the intruder must be turned aside. Five of us were appointed to

the work. It was evident that it would take about five weeks to accomplish it, during which time we would have to stand in water two or three feet deep. The idea of doing this at such a season without the aid of whisky appeared preposterous. Five gallons were therefore provided to start with. On a Monday morning we went to work, and during the week we drank what whisky we considered necessary ; but when Sabbath came we all felt so exhausted that instead of going to church we kept our beds most of the day. One of our party suggested that we should take no whisky to the work during the second week, but that in the evening of each day we should have a firm tumbler of toddy each before retiring to rest. This was unanimously agreed to ; and when the Sabbath again came round we found ourselves in a much better condition than at the end of the first week. Robert Scott, one of our number, about whom there was a great amount of quiet humour, said, "Lads, I would advise you to drink no more of that whisky ; but put it past till the job is finished, when we will employ a fiddler, and have a grand ball." This proposal was heartily approved of by us all ; and for three weeks afterwards we abstained entirely from drink, and were never so exhausted as we had been when drinking even the one tumbler of toddy. Not one of us at the time troubled his head about drawing inferences from the practical experience we had had. Since then, however, specially on one occasion, it served a good purpose. At a time when, in the providence of God, I had been visited with a sore bereavement, and was consequently dressed in black, I had occasion

one evening to address, from a fishing-boat at New-haven, a number of fishermen. Whilst so engaged, there came right in before me a gruff-looking son of the ocean, who evidently took me for what I was not, and said with an oath, "It's very easy for the like of you talking. If I had you on the northern seas, with your boots full of water, you would be glad of a glass of whisky." "How do you know, my good friend," I asked, "but that I may be able to tell of the merits or demerits of whisky in such circumstances as well as you?" A detail of the above five weeks' experience had the effect, not only of putting him to silence, but of causing him to give me a most attentive hearing to the end of my address. No scientific teaching upon the point by any man, however eminent, who had not had some such experience, would have secured from that man a patient hearing. It is scarcely necessary to say that, notwithstanding the flood of light that since then has been thrown on this very point, there are still many who boldly assert that whisky in such circumstances is beneficial, while they have never tried, and therefore have never found, how much better they would be without than with it. Men are exposed to severe cold, and drink grog and die. Exposure is charged with the loss of life; but the praise of grog continues. Had we continued to drink whisky to the end of the five weeks, to the extent we did during the first, and had any of us paid the penalty with our lives, exposure to cold, and not the whisky, would have got the credit of killing us. Men would no more have admitted that drink had had anything

to do with it, than they would have owned that abstinence put us in a more favourable condition for bearing exposure to cold and damp with impunity.

From 1828 to 1836 there were many questions of great importance which agitated the public mind, such as the Reform Bill, the Voluntary Question, the Non-Intrusion controversy, and what is now called the Old Temperance Reform.

It does not come within the range of my plan to state what part I took in these, except very briefly, for the purpose of throwing light upon other points that will afterwards be referred to. As for politics they never troubled my head much, but my leanings were with the Reformers, and perhaps it was unfortunate that when I did speak I did so pretty strongly and decidedly,—a practice generally thought commendable, but one which, when indulged in by a working man, depending in a great measure for support upon those holding strongly very opposite opinions, is not likely to prove profitable.

I embraced the Voluntary principle, on reading the Rev. W. Marshall's book on the subject; and many a hard battle I fought in its favour by the fire-side, way-side, and smithy hearth, and, alas! at Bacchanalian orgies too. It would certainly have been more amusing than instructive had I been capable of giving a detailed account of these battles.

There was one never-failing subterfuge (it could not be called argument) to which an intimate friend of mine—an elder of the Established Church—invariably be-

took himself when pressed into a corner. "Confound your long tongue," he would say, "make out an account of all you ever paid to the Kirk, and I will refund it." This was a demand not easily complied with, and, at the same time, it is very doubtful if he would have fulfilled his promise; but because I never presented my account he considered I should ever afterward maintain a becoming silence upon the subject, and look upon myself as having come off second best: this I was not willing to admit.

I took very little to do with the Non-Intrusionists; but no doubt I offended, in the estimation of not a few, by so far countenancing them when they made their appearance in the district. Honesty, however, compels me to confess that what little countenance I did accord them was more for the purpose of assisting them on their way to swell the ranks of dissent, than for anything else. It appeared to me that they had done their very best to bury dissent in a grave from which they hoped it would never have a resurrection, and therefore I earnestly longed to see the day when they would prove to the world that they had overshot the mark, and unwittingly imparted new vigour to the very thing they had tried hard to strangle. Some of my dissenting brethren were simple enough not to believe this, as the following incident will so far show:—It was about the years 1834-5 that a scheme for Church Extension in the Highlands was prosecuted with great vigour, principally by the very parties who were the leaders in the Non-Intrusion controversy. Accordingly, two elders of the Kirk (no doubt deeply sympathizing with

the gallant, generous Gael in his spiritual destitution) took upon themselves the labour of hawking a petition to Government in favour of the object through the parish. It so happened that on the day they had set apart for the work I had been invited to take tea with a personal friend of my own, connected with the Established Church. We had got tea past, and the paraphernalia of the tea-table had given place to that of the jolly god, when the elders came in and took their seats beside us with all becoming gravity. They very soon informed us of the great success they had had. I requested to be shown the document. It began—"We, your humble petitioners, being greatly attached to the Established Church of Scotland," &c., and then followed a long list of signatures, among which were those of almost all the dissenters in the parish. I was provoked at this, and said—"Gentlemen, will you be kind enough to inform me by what means you got all these dissenters, whose names I see here, to swallow this petition. Was it by false pretences, or did you read it distinctly over, and then leave them, uninfluenced, voluntarily to tell a falsehood? Do you really yourselves believe that they are 'greatly attached to the Established Church,' when you know for a fact that they scarcely ever cross her threshold, but prefer walking past her six or seven miles every Sabbath to worship elsewhere? You have succeeded in causing them to make fools of themselves—a thing which, had some other person been with you, would either have been prevented, or rendered more difficult for you to accomplish." This was more than sufficient to produce a

verbal storm. Down upon my devoted head came all the three with a tremendous volley, and now began the tug of war. One volley of words after another followed in rapid succession, and one tumbler of toddy after another, until, had any person come into the room, he would have concluded that, however much we might be differing about Church Extension, we were at one in helping to extend and perpetuate that drinking system which has for many generations most hindered the extension of Christ's kingdom in these lands. About ten o'clock the two elders, accompanied by the farmer, went to the kitchen to obtain the signatures of the servants. One of the elders proceeded to unroll on the kitchen table the document, as he thought, while the farmer was ordering his servants to come forward and sign. But, behold, when they approached the table, there was nothing there except a large sheet of coarse brown paper. Immediately all three returned to the parlour, and charged me with having stolen and hid the petition. Of course I denied the charge, declaring that my pocket should never be polluted with such a dirty affair. After a noisy search it was found below a piece of furniture, having fled there as if ashamed of our company. It was dragged from its hiding-place, and taken away to receive a few more names of those who knew little and cared less as to its real purport.

My impressions of what is now called the old Temperance "Reform" were anything but favourable. It was not easy to see the difference between drinking and getting drunk upon fermented and doing so upon distilled liquor. There appeared so much inconsis-

tency in the practice advocated that I most heartily opposed it whenever an opportunity was afforded. Oh with what hearty good will did I ring in the ears of its advocates, that a self-inconsistency could not in the nature of things constitute a virtue! One good man (Henry Murray), who no doubt thought I was getting too fond of whisky, was in the habit of urging upon me the propriety of becoming identified with the movement; and with equal earnestness I urged upon him reasons sufficiently strong, as I thought, on the other side. He never attempted a reply to my objections; but, with a significant shake of the head, would say, "My good lad, you don't know what you are speaking about." Perhaps he was pretty near the truth, but it was most provoking. Had he only consented to discuss the matter it would have been to me a great satisfaction; but to be set aside with a shake of the head, and told that you were ignorant of what you were speaking about, was not only galling, but made my opposition more determined. Notwithstanding the opinion of my friend, experience and observation had taught me that fermented liquors could make a man drunk, and create in him the appetite for drink, as certainly as ardent spirits; hence the resolution that all the pleadings of all the advocates of that movement should never induce me to identify myself with it; and, not much to my credit perhaps, this resolution was kept.

Having found out the most, perhaps the only, vulnerable point in the movement, I made the most of it, to the annoyance of its advocates. It is but honest, however, to say, that I think of the attitude I then

assumed towards these early Temperance Reformers with deep regret. With very different feelings from those I then entertained, I now think of their proceedings. All honour to them! They laid the world under a deep debt of obligation. In the midst of much scorn and contempt, they took the first step in the right direction—a step which culminated in that “Temperance” against which there is no law. After becoming an agent of the Scottish Temperance League, I met with one of these early temperance men in the valley of Almond, a short distance west from Edinburgh, who very frankly gave me a bit of his history. Being of an amusing nature, I repeat it here. He said—“Well, Mr. Easton, I understand you were never connected with the Old Temperance Reformation; but I was. The truth is, sir, when a young man, I was getting too fond of whisky. About the year 1830, or 1831, there came to this place some temperance men, and I resolved to hear them: having done so, I concluded that it would be well to act upon their advice, and abstain from what they called ardent spirits. By doing so I thought to reform myself, and thus so far assist in reforming the world. The difficulty of acting upon their advice did not appear great, seeing that we were to be allowed the use of wine, ale, porter, &c. I got along pretty well for some time; but, by and by, having drunk rather freely one evening of your far-famed Edinburgh ale, on my way home I staggered and fell right into the canal. When once more on dry ground, I said to myself, ‘If this be the way in which I am to reform myself and the world, it has a poor look-out.’

From that night, abstinence from all that could intoxicate was the practice I acted upon. I joined the Abstinence Society when it was organized in this place; and from that time till now, I have been a member. No doubt," he continued, "you are aware that a society has been got up of late, called the 'Short Pledge,' or Personal Abstinence Society—apparently for the accommodation of ministers—of this society my minister has become a member. A few nights ago we were talking together about temperance matters, and I told him of my falling into the canal under the influence of drink, while trying to work a reformation under the old temperance plan, and just when I was about to leave the manse he said, 'By the by, you would be hearing that we are to have a temperance meeting in our church, on Thursday evening, next week. Mr. — is coming out from Edinburgh to give us a lecture, and I will take it kind if you would make it known as widely as possible among your friends, that we may have a good meeting. Of course we may count upon you being present.' 'Well, sir,' I replied, 'to be plain with you, I have made up my mind to take nothing more to do with these kind of half-and-half measures. You know that I was nearly half-drowned with one of them.' 'Oh, but,' said he, 'that cannot befall any person acting on the principle of our society, because we abstain from all kinds of intoxicating drink.' 'That may be all true, sir,' I replied, 'but I might very easily half-drown some other body; and it was only last Sabbath, you will remember, that you were urging upon us the duty of loving our neighbour as ourselves,

and really, sir, in the light of your sermon, it does not appear very clear how a man could justify himself in adopting and acting out a principle whereby he might preserve himself from harm, and yet be the means of half-drowning others. The truth is, sir, you must come up to our platform, if you would succeed, and not try to bring us down to yours."

Having indicated briefly the attitude I assumed towards the various important subjects that were agitated during the period referred to, I have now to refer to an event of much more personal importance. Having pondered on the fact that it is not good for man to be alone, I sought out an help-meet for me, with whom I was joined in holy wedlock in the month of June, 1834, and after thirty years' pilgrimage, we still continue sharers of each other's joys and sorrows. I now settled down in the parish of Ewes, and contracted to uphold three miles of the public road.

Circumstances about this time demanded that the partnership between Mr. Brown and myself should be dissolved, and accordingly, in the beginning of 1836, we parted, with heart and purse as light as when we met. Perhaps no two men could be more opposite in the constitution of their minds than we were, and yet no two ever wrought together in greater harmony. We loved like brothers, and in no instance did we ever exchange angry words. It is, therefore, with delight that I now think of the time when a friendship so dear was formed, and which, thank God, remains unbroken to the present day—a friendship, as the sequel of this

story will show, which was the cause of effecting a complete revolution in my mind in reference to drink and drinking.

A short time after we parted, a noise went abroad that a few men in Preston had taken a pledge to abstain from all intoxicating drink, and had formed a society based on that principle, and that to this new movement had been given the strange (and to me, at the time, incomprehensible) cognomen "Teetotal." It was very evident that the inconsistency which had justly been charged against the previous temperance movement, could not be charged against this one; yet, strange as it may appear, I was not one whit more favourably inclined to the one than to the other, and set myself to oppose any who advocated its claims. These at the time, however, were rarely met with. My opposition to this new-fangled scheme received great vigour from hearing my respected minister, the Rev. J. Dobie, to whom I was much attached, say, one Sabbath, after the communion, "That if the vows we had made that day at the table of the Lord did not keep us sober, all other pledges would prove in vain." This to my mind was conclusive. There were few expressions which that good man uttered during the time I sat under his ministry, of which I made more use. It was a weapon ever at hand, and wielded with damaging effect against "teetotalism." Ultimately, however, its soundness began to appear very doubtful. When in the company, one day, of a number of men who were well known to have no sympathy with my minister in other and more important matters, and while

drink was being circulated very freely amongst us, this new-fangled thing, as we called it, was introduced as a topic for discussion, or rather, as a criminal to be condemned. Every one had something to say against it, and at the conclusion of my remarks I quoted what my pastor had said. This was received with a hearty round of applause, as being a complete extinguisher to the poor teetotalers ; but, coming from such parties, that applause led me to doubt the orthodoxy of what my minister had said, and not liking to hear him applauded by such a company, I never quoted it again. Indeed, had it not been from the same principle which leads drowning men to catch at straws, such an expression would never have been uttered, and never quoted ; since the only merit it possesses is that it contains a great amount of nonsense in very little space. A very little reflection might have sufficed to show us that, from some cause or other, the vows taken at the "Table of the Lord" did not keep men sober, and a little further reflection would have discovered to us what that was. We vowed to resist the devil, the world, and the flesh, but we never dreamt of including amongst the agencies for evil which these imply, the ordinary use of intoxicating drinks. Had abstinence from these drinks been one of the Christian graces we resolved to practise, and had we continued faithful to our resolution, we would not only have been kept sober, but our abstinence would have been helpful to us in many ways in performing the obligations in general which we had come under. But this was not done, and intoxicating drink having no more respect to the stomach and brain of a

Christian than to those of an infidel, very many who took communion vows upon them were to be seen, now and again, less or more drunk. Considering the nature of intoxicating drink, its effects on the human system, and the self-denial which communicants pledge themselves to exercise, it could easily be shown, were this the proper time and place to do so, that it is the duty of all such to abstain. It is a grand mistake, or rather delusion, to suppose that the pledge of "abstinence," on the part of a Christian, is something additional to what he comes under at the table of the Lord. It is only one practical application of the principles he then publicly acknowledges as those by which he should regulate his life. But in regard to all this, twenty-seven years ago I was in perfect darkness, and, what is worse, made no effort to obtain light. It may be, even, that I loved the darkness, and was afraid to come to the light, lest my deeds should be reprov'd.

Being asked one day by my partner in life what kind of people "Teetotalers" were, I replied that I did not know, but apprehended they were a class of men very ambitious of notoriety, and not having brain to gain their object by ordinary means, had adopted what they called Teetotalism. Such was the uncharitable opinion I then expressed of Teetotalers and their movement. A very short time, however, proved that they were not the brainless class I had thought. In the year 1838 the Rev. Robert Gray Mason, from Bolton, England, came across the Border, and, among many other places, he lectured in the town of Hawick, where Mr. W. Brown resided. From curiosity, or

some more worthy motive, Brown attended the meetings of that earnest and eloquent advocate of temperance—than whom few, if any, have been honoured in doing more good—and under his winning eloquence was persuaded to adopt the pledge of “abstinence” from all intoxicating drink. I soon heard the news, and at once concluded that some strange hallucination had taken possession of my friend’s brain, and that his large stock of common-sense had taken the road out by the Wallygate, there being no Cowgate in Hawick by which it could have made its exit. But no, it turned out to be my common-sense that was at fault. A society was organized in Hawick on the 9th or 10th of April, 1838, and Mr. Brown put on the committee, in which position he proved himself an efficient worker. The new movement had fairly caught his heart and head, and he lost no opportunity of urging its claims. Three months after the society had commenced operations, Brown announced to his brethren of the committee his intention of paying a visit to his old friend Easton, for the purpose of making him an abstainer, adding—“If I can manage that, he will be a gain to our cause, for he has a ready tongue.” On the 26th of July, 1838, Brown set out upon his mission, and after a walk of eighteen miles landed at our house. Just before his arrival, Mrs. E. had presented me with a daughter. According to use and wont, there was intoxicating drink in the house, and, unfortunately, the decanters stood in a cupboard with a transparent door. The moment Brown entered, his eye caught them, and down he came upon me like a thousand furies. With-

out interruption he was allowed to have out his say, as I felt confident that I would soon put an extinguisher upon him. As soon as he had concluded his first outburst I took a hearty laugh, observing that, if he went on at that rate, there could be no doubt but he was destined to turn out a notable preacher among the Methodists. He very soon convinced me that the subject, in his estimation, was of too great importance to be set aside with a laugh. He assured me, with great earnestness, that it involved interests of vastly greater importance than I appeared to be aware of. I either could not or would not see that such was the case, and set to work quite coolly to oppose him, fancying that there were so many conclusive arguments by which the moderate use of drink could be defended—specially the wine of Cana, and Timothy's stomach; but it would not do. He was intensely practical, and would on no account submit to fine hair-splitting discussions. It would have been as easy to convince him that two and two make five, as to get him to admit that he had the worst of the argument. He appeared to have an inward consciousness that he was right, although not able to pull me out of all my fancied strongholds. Accordingly, with a dogged perseverance, he continued for three days to press the subject upon my attention. Such a pressure was all but sufficient to make me sign the pledge, to get quit of his importunity. He evidently had benefited from the success the poor widow had with the unjust judge. When about to depart, feeling satisfied that all he had said was to no purpose, he took me by the hand and said, "Will you grant me

one request?" "Most assuredly, if it be within my power," I replied. "What is it?" "Will you give this subject about which we have been speaking your serious consideration, and examine it faithfully as in the sight of God, and then act according to your convictions." His request was most heartily granted. "That is all I ask," he said. "Farewell! may God be with you;" and so we parted.

Now, reader, if you are not an abstainer let me affectionately entreat you to resolve upon making a similar investigation. It may be helpful to you to learn how one, whose feelings and prejudices were as much opposed to abstinence as yours can be, conducted it. Without procrastinating I went to work, praying God to direct me to a right conclusion. Examining first what the Bible said on the matter, I was thoroughly convinced that no man was under any obligation to use intoxicating drink, and that the abstainer could show a more distinct sanction for his abstinence in the Bible than the drinker could for his drinking. The truth is, the more the Bible was studied, the more evident it became that the less that volume was dragged in to defend the practice of drinking the better. Having reached the conviction that, should any man choose, he was at least at perfect liberty to abstain, I was now in a proper condition to proceed to examine all the *pros* and *cons* that might be presented. Charity, it is said, begins at home. The first question presenting itself was, "Had I ever been benefited by using intoxicating drink?" An affirmative to this question would at the time have

been very acceptable. That I had *thought* I had been the better there was no doubt; but *thought* so was not satisfactory evidence that such had been the case, to a man under solemn promise to deal honestly with the subject. Conscience asked, "What reasons can you give for thinking that you have been benefited by drink? Is there anything in it, because of its intoxicating quality, that can do you good?" Being ignorant of the elements of which drink is composed, these were questions hard to answer satisfactorily. I therefore consulted the writings of a few scientific men who had then investigated the subject, and found the general opinion to be, that to a healthy man such drink was not only unnecessary, but that it could produce no beneficial effect; on the contrary, that a more healthy condition could be attained by abstinence; or in other words, in proportion to the quantity partaken of, so would be the injury done. It would have been presumption to set up my opinion against the testimony of such men; the conclusion, therefore, forced upon me was, that the benefit received from drink had been more imaginary than real. The following questions then pressed themselves upon me in rapid succession,—“Had I ever suffered personally or relatively from drink? What had been its effects upon many around me, and specially upon those among whom I had spent my lifetime?” As to whether I had received personal injury from drink, or not, there was no necessity to call in scientific men to settle the question. There was a witness to this within myself. Conscience said “Yes, you have suffered, it is im-

possible to deny it, and it is equally certain that you have been injured relatively." Why then not cheerfully agree to become an abstainer? At this point of the inquiry the ground did appear to be slipping from under me; but, looking only at self, I pled that any injury drink had done me was so slight that there was no pressing call upon me to take that step, and, besides, doing so would shut me out from that sociality with companions and friends that had been so often and heartily enjoyed. This did not, however, settle the matter, for it still remained to ask, "What is sociality?" and "Can it not be enjoyed without the aid of drink?" A brief consideration was sufficient to remind me, that to enjoy with my fellows a free exchange of feeling and sentiment, and to be thereby benefited, a necessary condition was a sound mind. And experience had taught me that if drink was notorious for anything, it was for disturbing the balance of the mind, and causing the sociality enjoyed at the bacchanalian board to end not unfrequently in broken heads. In short, the conclusion forced upon me was that the sociality which owed its birth and existence to whisky was not worthy of the name. So far then as drink had affected myself personally and relatively, however unwilling to become an abstainer, there was no good ground upon which to justify my conduct in continuing to drink.

The next question was, "What has been the effect of drink upon many around me?" To answer this I proceeded to group into one picture all those whom I had known to have suffered from drink, and as one

after another was added, it became so large and dark that it was appalling to look upon. Out of one hundred and fifty farmers in the district, I could at that time name fifty who had been ruined in purse or person, and in many cases in both, while six of them had died of *delirium tremens*. The astonishment I felt while enumerating the gifted, generous-hearted men who had been thus ruined cannot be described. In passing, I would say, let any man who can look back twenty or thirty years sit down and take a note of all whom he has known drink to have ruined, and he will be perfectly amazed at their number! But to return, I had still to ask, "What has been my experience among working-men? How has drink affected them?" For nearly five years I had wrought with a contractor, and for eight had been one myself, and therefore had had ample opportunities of judging. And, as an honest man, the only answer I could give was, "Drink is an unmitigated curse to working-men, and a more cruel and suicidal act than giving them drink could not be perpetrated by employers." Never in all my experience had I known drink so bestowed without damage of one kind or another being done to man and master. Many notable instances of this might be given. Let one, in which I was the principal actor, suffice. In the years 1831 and 1832 we were engaged upon a contract near Selkirk. After the Reform Bill had passed, there was a day set apart for the celebration of the event in the burgh. Whigs drank and were merry; the Tories in sullen mood looked on, thinking, no

doubt, of the good old times passing away amidst the shouts of half-drunk Reformers. There was a complete cessation from all labour and business except drink-selling. In these circumstances our men were wandering up and down in twos and threes, with not a sixpence in their pockets. Pay-day was past, and all was in the maw of the Black Bull. Through mistaken kindness, I was stupid enough to order our foreman (John Armstrong) to summon all the men to the Black Bull at four o'clock P.M. Punctual to a minute, they were at the trysting place—fifty in number. Not one failed to make his appearance.

Our worthy host, William Ballantyne, the most accommodating of men in such cases, showed us into a large room that had been arranged for our reception. Having taken the chair, I addressed them on the topic of the day, and concluded by informing them that they had been called together that they might, along with all true-hearted Reformers, drink a bumper to the downfall of despotism in all its various forms, and success to freedom the world over, and that to enable them to do so, orders had been given, that until the town clock struck six they were to be supplied with whatever drink they chose to call for. Whatever they thought of my speech as a whole, may be doubtful, but the closing sentence evidently gave great satisfaction, for on resuming my seat I was greeted with a thundering round of applause; and when the chair was vacated at six o'clock, the whole company left, all less or more the worse of drink. I retired to another room, where two Reformers were discussing a bottle of

wine. Having called for my bill—which by no means was a reform one—and paid it, the landlord ordered a bottle of his best wine, and joining the other two Reformers present, we spent a jovial evening, rejoicing over the downfall of rotten burghs, &c. But, alas! my sin was soon to find me out. A messenger arrived, informing us that my men had been making a terrible row; that some of them had been lodged in jail—and that I was wanted to bail them out. We all agreed in thinking they would be safest where they were, and so they were allowed to remain till the following morning. There can be no doubt that the *right* man was not incarcerated that night. These fifty men never again all appeared on the ground. Some of the best workers among them left on the following day, quite affronted at having been put in jail. How true it is that drink is a curse to servant and master! With all this, and far more of a similar nature that might have been drawn from the chambers of my memory, the question was very naturally suggested—“What might have been the effect upon these men had I been an abstainer? Might I not have exercised an influence over them for good?” Of this there could be no doubt. “Why, then,” asked conscience, “not at once assume a position in which you could do more good to others, and at least no injury to yourself?” I was unwilling, however, to take the step, although my better judgment was inclining in that direction. What was wanting with me at this stage of the investigation was sufficient moral fortitude to carry out my convictions. One night, however, after a hard day’s labour, I was

sitting pondering over the subject, when my eldest son, a boy of four years old, was amusing himself at the fireside. He very naturally attracted my attention, and the thought forced itself upon me—"What if that boy, whom I now caress with all the fondness of a parent's heart, should at some future time look back and curse the day when, under the parental roof, he was taught to taste the drunkard's drink?" The bare possibility of such a thing went like a dagger to my heart. My drinking days were ended: sufficient motive power had now been obtained to enable me to pass by the wine of Cana, Timothy's stomach, and all the other subterfuges had recourse to by drinkers and drunkards. Mentally, I said, "God helping me, come what may, I will from this night live and die an abstainer." More than twenty-six years have passed away since then, and I have never had reason to regret the resolution; but have, on the contrary, had much reason to thank God for leading me to make, and enabling me to keep it. Never did I feel more thankful for this than when acting as a Temperance Missionary in Edinburgh, and when standing by the bedside of a drunken woman, endeavouring to persuade her to give up drinking. Having appealed to her in behalf of her five hungry children, who were romping about the floor of a house in which there was neither bread nor fire, though to my knowledge her husband was earning five-and-twenty shillings a week, and having pointed out to her the awful doom she was preparing for herself, I was in the act of repeating that glorious exclamation of the apostle, "This is a faith-

ful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief," when the door was opened, and an old woman, apparently on the shady side of threescore and ten entered. The silvery locks of age were hanging over her forehead. With staff in hand she approached the bedside, and began to remonstrate, and ultimately to upbraid the poor drunken woman. Recognizing the voice of her mother, she started up, and fixing her half-glazed eyes upon her, she closed her fist and said—"Hold your tongue; it was you that taught me to drink when I was a girl at your own fireside. It is all true the man tells me. I know it; I am on the broad road to ruin; my soul is lost, lost, for ever lost; but the loss of my soul I lay at your door. It was you,—yes, it was you, that learned me to drink." If ever any man was thankful that he was an abstainer, it was I on that occasion. It was satisfactory to know that, happen what might to my children, not one of them was, and I trust never will be, able to address me as this woman did her mother.

Before proceeding with my narrative, the fact is worth recording, that after long experience as a Temperance Agent, I have met with more parents who have become abstainers for the sake of setting a safe example to their children than for any other reason. There is no method by which you will more readily reach the hearts of such, and get them to abstain, than by appealing to them on behalf of their children; and, on the other hand, there is nothing more tends to show the power of habit, custom, and appetite, than the fact

that so many of them can and do withstand these appeals.

While prosecuting the above investigation I abstained from taking intoxicating drink, thinking that it was only right and proper to do so until I was fully persuaded in my own mind as to what ought to be my future conduct. This plan I would recommend to the adoption of every one who would honestly examine the claims of Abstinence; because these are not easily discovered when sought for through the dense medium of alcoholic drink.

Having now fulfilled my promise to Mr. Brown, my next duty was to inform him of the result, and request my name to be enrolled in the book of the Hawick Temperance Society. Before my letter was despatched, however, I heard that a deputation from the Dumfries Society was about to visit Langholm to try and organize a Society there. The letter was therefore retained until the result of the intended meeting was known. The day of meeting came, and with it the deputation, consisting of Messrs. Broom, Gregan, Lawson and Wardrobe. A crowded meeting waited them. Mr. Broom took the chair, and, with all the others, did his duty well. With intense interest I listened to their addresses, feeling all the more comfortable that my mind had previously been made up on the subject. At the close an opportunity was given to all who were disposed to ally themselves with the movement, to give in their names. The first who had the courage to do so in

the face of the whole congregation was my old friend Henry Murray, who had often tried hard to convert me to the old Temperance movement. Twelve followed his example, of whom I was one. In the course of a few weeks a great number more gave in their adherence. Some of these, when the day of trial came, went back to the drink, like the dog to his vomit, but many remain true to the principle to the present day, while not a few have only been lost to the movement by their removal to another, and, we trust, a better world. They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.

Being now publicly committed to the temperance cause, but not without having first counted the cost, I was in some measure prepared to fight in its behalf. And it was not long before I was challenged to the combat. Opponents started up on every hand. All conceivable arguments, along with the piercing shafts of ridicule, were hurled most unmercifully against the step I had taken. I was taunted with wishing to be righteous overmuch; with courting notoriety; with having resigned my liberty; with having manifested weakness that had not been expected of me; with acting contrary to all my previously expressed opinions. Not only had I to endure all such taunts, and rebut all such arguments, but to account for every passage in the Bible where wine is favourably spoken of. Being at that time very unprepared to discuss the wine question, I sometimes felt a little awkward when it was introduced. Fortunately, however, my assailants were fully less prepared than I was; for they

had never thought upon the subject at all, and hence they were the more easily kept at bay. Meanwhile, I resolved to have myself posted up on the general arguments in favour of the cause, and in particular upon the wine question. Everything that had been written upon the latter topic, upon which I could lay my hand, was carefully read and thought upon; but it was not until the year 1854 that I ventured to give a lecture upon it.

Opposition had been, anticipated, and therefore did not take me by surprise. It appeared to be a kind of righteous retribution to have to meet and overturn the very arguments I had myself so frequently used against the cause. Had less been said by me in favour of drinking previously, it would not have been needful to have said so much against it now. However, the opposition did me good: it rooted and grounded me in the principle and practice of abstinence. Had I been let alone, the weapons of offence and defence might not have been sought for as they were. The most annoying bit of opposition I met with was from a horse I had at the time: he was a sagacious animal, and had no ordinary memory, and consequently it was scarcely possible to get him past any public-house at which we had ever called. It was quite amusing to lookers-on—but to me very provoking—to witness the struggle between us. He determined to turn in, and I, as firmly, that we should not; and although, for many years afterwards, we wrought together, and with the weary world fought, he never got reconciled to the step I had taken. Had we both fared alike when calling at

such places, his common-sense would have approved of what I had done. His continued opposition may be accounted for on the ground that on such occasions he got the staff of life and I the water of death. No opposition, however, whether from man or horse, was to be permitted to turn me from my purpose. By the application of the whip-argument the horse could be got past the public-house; but this was neither allowable nor suitable for men and women, although, some years afterwards, half in anger, half in despair, when dealing with a drunken woman, I proposed to her a still more speedy and effectual way of getting quit of the public-house. When acting as a Temperance Missionary in Edinburgh, I met with a woman, the wife of an abstainer, who was addicted to intemperance. I took a more than ordinary interest in the case, and called upon her regularly, and frequently succeeded in getting her to abstain for a fortnight, and on one occasion so long as six weeks, when my hopes of her recovery began to be very sanguine. Being at this time about to enter the service of the Scottish Temperance League, and not dreaming that she had returned to her old ways, I called for the purpose of encouraging her in the good course she had entered; but was both annoyed and provoked to find her very much the worse of drink. Looking her sternly in the face, I said, "Are you not ashamed of yourself? Your cruelty to your industrious husband is beyond description. The fact is, it would serve you right to purchase a shilling's worth of rope, and hang you over the North Bridge." More grieved for her husband than for her,

I left, not knowing what effect my visit might have upon her. Two years afterwards, while addressing a meeting in Parliament Square, I noticed this woman and her husband standing in the crowd, both well dressed. When I came down from my platform, they came forward and shook hands with me, and the first thing the woman said was—"Ah, Mr. Easton, you'll not *now* propose to hang me over the North Bridge." "What," I asked, "are you an abstainer now?" "Yes," she replied, "I never could get what you said out of my mind. I did think that I must have acted wickedly when you considered me worthy of being hung, and since then I have never tasted drink." I accepted an invitation to visit them on the following day, and found them very comfortable; and now, at the end of fifteen years, she remains an abstainer, giving good hope that her abstinence has been but the prelude to better things. It is pleasing to know that, along with her husband, she attends upon the ministrations of a U. P. Minister in the City of Edinburgh. Probably some may consider the expression I used not only unbecoming, but vulgar. Well, I attempt no defence; but only remind such, that it is not with a fine lancet the woodman fells the stubborn oak that has stood the storms of a hundred years. On some we are to "have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire."

Begging pardon for the above digression, I now return to my narrative. In looking out for weapons with which to carry on the temperance warfare, I had

not the remotest idea of ever wielding them on a platform, far less from the sacred elevation of a pulpit. However, I had now heard working-men speak, and was frequently hearing of their speaking, with great acceptance, on the temperance question. The thought struck me—"If working men of other professions can make speeches, why not a road-man?" Being reminded that there was no trust like trial, trust and try I did. The necessary materials being brought together, I sat down to write my maiden speech; but how to begin was a tremendous difficulty. Having been reading the *Pilgrim's Progress*, a few lines that occur in Bunyan's apology for his book came to my mind,—

"Thus I set pen to paper with delight,
And quickly had my thoughts in black and white;
For having now my method by the end,
Still as I pulled, it came, and so I penned."

Though not able to say "I had my method by the end," I resolved, nevertheless, to commit my thoughts to paper, hoping that in the end they would have method too. With dusty ink, a bad pen, and a few detached pieces of paper, I set to work, and wrote down the ideas uppermost in my mind, until, so far as length was concerned, a speech was the result. Being my first, I was no doubt proud of it, and read it over and over till it was as thoroughly impressed on my mind as ever the Twenty-third Psalm had been. A working-man from Manchester was announced to address a temperance meeting in Langholm, in the end of the year 1838, and of course I resolved to hear him. Having five miles to

walk, the meeting was begun before I got forward. The church in which it was held was crowded. To my great surprise, and no less gratification, my worthy minister, the Rev. John Dobie, was on his feet, pouring forth appeals in favour of abstinence, with all that holy earnestness so characteristic of him when addressing an audience. While glad to see him where he was, and to hear him speak as he did, I flattered myself with the thought of having taken the right side before him. Had it been otherwise, there was little doubt as to what would have been said. Pressing my way through the crowd, I found a seat in front of the speaker. When he had finished his maiden speech on the subject, he announced that the gentleman who had been expected to address the meeting had not come forward ; but he trusted some one present would come forward and make a few remarks. No one responded to his invitation. Looking to me, he said, " George, come away up, and say a few things." I was not disobedient to such a personal call ; but rose in a kind of half-involuntary manner, and made my way towards the desk, feeling all the more confident, that my speech was in my pocket. When about to step on to the pulpit stair I felt a little shaky, and, not knowing what might be the result when turning round to face the audience, I thought it best to take the precaution of having the speech in my hand. In pulling it from my pocket, one of the pieces of paper upon which it was written fell from my hand : addressing the chairman, I said, " Sir, thirdly is gone." " Never mind thirdly, George ; we will be well content to get firstly

and secondly to-night," said he. This brought down thunders of applause, which nerved me greatly, and caused me to feel more at ease. Turning to the audience, I commenced, and went right on to the end, in a regular slap-dash style, paying no more attention to points, periods, or paragraphs, than if such things had been wholly unworthy of notice, and concluded by repeating the following verses:—

"I've cast the bowl away;
For me no more shall flow
It's ruddy stream and sparkling tide,
How bright soe'er they glow.
I've seen extending far and wide
It's devastating sway;
Seen reason yield its power to guide:
I've cast the bowl away.

"Oh ne'er tempt me again
To drain that cup of sin;
For ruin dire, disease, and death,
Taint all that flow within.
Neglected duties rise,
In fearful sad array,
Up to the brim. I will be wise:
I've cast the bowl away.

"I've seen the pride of all,
The wise, the good, the great,
Like summer leaves, untimely fall,
And leave their high estate.
I've seen fair woman give
Her every charm away,
Embrace the demon vile, and live:
I've cast the bowl away.

“ My path henceforth is plain,
In righteousness to live ;
To shun inebriation's train,
My zeal to temperance give,
No duty to neglect ;
But live to bless the day
When I was led, without regret,
To cast the bowl away.”

I took my seat in a state of perspiration, amid loud applause ; having passed through what to me, at that time, was a severe ordeal. Since then I have never delivered an address that has taken an audience so much by surprise. That night nothing was expected by my hearers, hence they were certain not to be disappointed, and, if they got anything, they were sure to be pleased. The result was that, for a few days, I was very popular.

Whether the speech was good or bad matters not. I had now written it, and in the presence of a large audience had *said it* over—it would be too much to say *delivered it*.

Having heard of a man who was in the habit of saying, when addressing any young man, “Persevere, my man, persevere : perseverance is the best word in all the catechism.” So I persevered in reading, thinking, and writing ; and before long I was invited out to meetings for thirty miles round ; and very frequently in company with the Rev. Mr. Dobie, from whom I derived more benefit and encouragement than from any other man. All honour to his memory ! The thought of what he was, and how he laboured, has oft-

times strengthened and refreshed me, and hundreds more who had the pleasure of his friendship and fellowship. He was not one of those narrow-minded, self-conceited men, who think that none should attempt public speaking unless they belong to their own order, or are immensely rich, or profound scholars. He was a believer in every man doing what he could with what he had, and held himself in readiness to help the feeblest and humblest, in an honest effort to do what they could.

It would be an endless task to give an account of my abstinence life during the first ten years; but many a time, after a hard day's work, have I washed my hands and face in the running stream or standing pool, my dressing-room the back of a dyke or corner of a plantation, where, hastily, without the aid of mirror, brush, or comb, to adjust the hair to a hair's-breadth, I dressed, and then set out upon a journey of ten miles to address a meeting; and having done so, have returned home in the morning to my work, as if nothing had happened. In none of all these midnight journeyings did any misfortune befall me, except on one occasion, when I very narrowly escaped being drowned. One night, on the way to the place of meeting, a rapidly running stream crossed my path, which on my return was greatly swollen. What was to be done? There was no bridge near. Trusting to a kind Providence, I plunged in, and somehow or other reached the other side in safety. This drenching served for the time being to cool down my enthusiasm, and made me almost resolve to abstain from all such noc-

turnal pilgrimages; but before another call for my services came I was as ready for the road as ever. During the time referred to, I assisted to sow the good seed of temperance in Langholm, Lockerbie, Annan, Dumfries, Moffat, Galashiels, Hawick, Selkirk, Newcastleton, Canonby, Waterbeck, Eaglesfield, and various other places. I have a sad recollection of a meeting in Eaglesfield in the year 1846. On entering the school-room, a letter was put into my hand, announcing the death of my respected father. Being for the moment overcome, it was hard to decide whether to speak, or to announce the reason why I could not. To do the latter would have been more painful than the former; so, without saying anything, I delivered my lecture; but, as the reader may easily suppose, with a heavy heart. Having already recorded that it was in company with my father that my first visit to the public-house was paid, it is cause of great thankfulness to be able to add that for several years before his death he was an abstainer, and thoroughly sympathized with me in the part I took in the temperance movement.

Temperance agents have sometimes been taunted with—"You are well paid for advocating the cause." Having been employed now for sixteen years advocating the claims of temperance, I have cheerfully, and, I trust, thankfully accepted the needful remuneration, knowing that the labourer is worthy of his hire; but during the first ten years of my temperance life I laboured heartily without fee or reward, the motive power being a clearer perception than formerly of the

claims God had upon man, and that there was more required of him than to work, eat, sleep, and enjoy himself. It was during these ten years, too, that many endearing friendships were formed which were blessed to my soul, so that, even then, in a most important sense, my labours were well paid for. It is but justice, and therefore most befitting, that I should here mention my having been, during the time referred to, presented by the society in Newcastleton with a handsome pocket-bible, by a few friends near Waterbeck with an excellent plaid, and by the Lockerbie Society with ten shillings, as an acknowledgment for my services.

When looking back upon what was then done to propagate the good cause, it does appear as if we had been taken possession of by a kind of wild enthusiasm not easily accounted for—an enthusiasm not confined to one locality, but characteristic of the early pioneers of the movement everywhere. This enthusiasm was necessary to enable us to overcome the desperate opposition with which we had to contend. Our experience of the benefits resulting from temperance made us hopeful that on a plain statement of the facts being laid before our countrymen, and specially before the Christian community, they would at once, and cheerfully, give us the benefit of their co-operation; but we were sadly mistaken; and some of us, forgetting, no doubt, how long and bitterly we had opposed the movement ourselves, were not a little surprised. Time has taught us that much more working, praying, and waiting are required to uproot long-established habits than we at that time thought of. If, however,

experience has mellowed down our sanguine expectations a little, it has also confirmed us in the goodness of our cause, and strengthened our faith in its ultimate, if not speedy triumph.

It is often said that it is much easier to be an abstainer now than it was then. This is true ; but opposition to the movement has not entirely disappeared. It has in many cases only assumed another form. The enemy has changed his tactics: abstaining from open, active firing, he has in a great measure retired within the fort of callous indifference. We feel the latter opposition not so annoying as we felt the former ; but it makes it much more difficult to reach and grapple with the evil, while it is not so well fitted to stir us to enthusiasm. There are very few *now* who will publicly proclaim themselves hostile to our principles ; but there are still those whose hatred to the movement, as a whole, is as deep-seated as ever. So much is this the case, that so recently as 1864, papers stating the claims temperance has upon the Christian community could not be allowed to appear as an advertisement on the cover of a periodical belonging to one of the largest denominations of Christians in Scotland. Strange anomaly, that, after a time of revival, during which God visibly put the stamp of his condemnation upon the drink-system, our religious publications should continue to advertise "Islay Whisky," "Buxton's Entire," and other intoxicating drinks, and yet positively refuse to advertise the claims of that temperance upon which God had during the same revival specially put his stamp of approbation. Some of our churches are taking steps

towards becoming united with each other; but while I would pronounce no opinion upon the union proposed, I have no hesitation in saying that it would be well were they at once to take steps to get disunited from the drink-system.

Another phase of the opposition with which we have to contend at present is the great sympathy and good-will expressed towards us by many who still support the drinking system. This may appear paradoxical, but it is true. As in all other reform movements, so in this—no opposition is more difficult to reach and overcome, and more trying to patient perseverance and zeal, than that which arises from lip-professions of friendship at variance with life-practice. And there is no question but that, of late years, we have been in danger—and are so still—of being drawn down by such treatment. While we should be thankful for any indications there are that the sympathies of good men are tending in the direction of our principles, we should take good care neither to put them nor ourselves in a false position. I do not know of anything better fitted to damage our cause, to bring it into contempt, and to quench our enthusiasm, than fawning upon and courting men who are not abstainers, however great and good they may be in other respects, to come to our platforms, or to preside at our meetings. The truth is—and it is of no use mincing the matter—we have arrived at a time when, in order to be considered all but an advanced temperance reformer, a man, even when continuing to sip his wine, has only to pay his subscription and thunder forth an-

athemas against the traffic. If he do these things, whatever else he leaves undone, he will be held up by some professedly temperance reformers as the pink of perfection. Oh that we again saw the day when the scavenger, if an abstainer, was preferred to the Provost who was not, to take the chair at a temperance meeting!—Days when men who drank had sense enough to say nothing against the drink or the drink traffic; but were stupid enough to say all they could against abstinence. What we want is, such an opposition as would once more draw forth that energy and enthusiasm which were so manifest among temperance reformers in the early days of the movement; when men were to be found in every society willing, after their daily toil, to burn the midnight lamp writing speeches, and rehearsing them in the gloaming in some quiet corner of a garden, or in the deep recess of a quarry, and afterwards delivering them in the school-room, at the market-cross, or wherever they had an opportunity. Often, indeed, there seemed to be little fruit from their labour; but, nothing daunted, they continued to give a little here and a little there of temperance teaching, in a manner, perhaps, less elegant than truthful, and they had their reward in the good which they saw accomplished. Such temperance volunteers are greatly needed in 1865.

In the years referred to, I was very much blamed for saying hard things of ministers. Though not prepared to put in the plea “not guilty,” a few things may be stated of an extenuating nature. My know-

ledge of ministers was at that time very limited; and many who were known to me, while they might in the ordinary phraseology of society be styled "moderate," certainly no abstainer, with his eyes and ears open, would have applied that term to them. Possibly enough, the stock was not like the sample; and I may have fallen into a common mistake of judging the general body from a very small number; but I venture to think that, in the circumstances, I was in some measure excusable. On one occasion a number of the class referred to were offended with what I said; but the reader will be able to judge from the following statement of facts whether or not there was any cause for their being so:—

Being in a locality thirteen miles from home, I attended a congregational soiree there as a hearer. Some one, noticing me in the church, proposed to the ministers that I should be requested to speak. This was readily agreed to; but as I was unprepared to speak, except upon temperance, and as I did not wish to be accounted an intruder, I positively refused. However, after being hard pressed, I gave my consent, upon condition that I should be the last speaker. This condition, however, was so far modified, that one speaker was to come after me. My sole reason for wishing to be last was, that having no speech but what had been previously given in the locality, I expected that, from my knowledge of the temperance question, there would not be much difficulty in drawing arguments in its favour from the speeches of those who should precede me. The subjects treated by the other

speakers were—"Blind Asylums," "Early Piety," "Human Responsibility," "Moral Obligation of the Sabbath," and "Astronomy."

In due course, I was called upon for my address. The introductory remarks were to the following effect:—"The Reverend gentleman who is to follow me is to address you on Astronomy; and very likely after calling your attention to this cold frozen earth (it was a severe frost at the time), he will conduct you to the moon, thence to various planets, and will ultimately land you on Uranus—that lately discovered one—and inform you of its comparative brightness and magnitude, and when, and by whom it has been discovered; and he will likely also remind you that, although only recently known to us, it had its sphere allotted to it ere yet the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy. It is my purpose, however, to call your attention to a planet, or rather a star of the first magnitude, but of a very different kind—the temperance star. I shall not at present stay to speak of its brightness and magnitude, or of the particular place it occupies in the moral firmament, but assure you that it is no mere meteor. It had its place, as well as all others of the same nature, when our first progenitors appeared in Eden's garden. Then it shone forth with great brilliancy, and ever since has been less or more visible; only in our country for long it has been obscured by the smoke of distilleries and the fumes of the brewer's vat. Lately, however, by the aid, not of Lord Rosse, but of a few working-men at Preston, the intervening cloud has been partially

dispelled, and the seemingly long-lost star discovered, and its discoverers, with others, are now walking in its light, and are being guided to sources of happiness to which hitherto they have been strangers. Their desire and mine is that all may enjoy similar blessings. To help to this result, I desire now to put the drinking-system by which that star has been obscured upon its trial. You shall constitute the jury; and I shall endeavour to prove that the gentlemen who have already spoken have shown good reason why the severest penalty of the law should be inflicted upon the culprit, and also why they, above many others, should lend a helping hand in bringing that about."

Having said so much, I proceeded to take up the arguments of the previous speakers, and to apply them unsparingly against "the prisoner at the bar;" now and then appealing to the jury, and asking whether men who held such views should not withdraw all countenance from a criminal that had in his career been so notorious for Sabbath desecration, destruction of early piety, and every conceivable wickedness. Long before I had finished, the jury were evidently satisfied that my case was proved, while the ministers were as evidently getting uncomfortable. When the meeting was over, we retired to the manse; but only one of the ministers took any notice of me, and that was to inform me that his grandfather had been a maltster, and was considered a very pious man. My reply was—"David was a pious man, but did some very wicked things." In the presence of the jury I felt there was no fear of the ministers venturing to oppose what had

been said. Probably they would have thought it below their dignity to break a lance in public with a Roadman; but it was very different in a private parlour. On such ground they were more likely to draw their weapons freely; and being ground upon which I never was, and perhaps never will be disposed to fight, I concluded that my best policy was to withdraw, and leave them to heal the wounds they had received as best they could.

A very exaggerated report of my speech reached the ears of my good, affectionate mother, and drew upon my head a sharp rebuke. "George," she said, "I hear, lad, that ye ha'e been meddling with the ministers. Ye maun never do that again. Mind ye, they are black crows to shoot at; and it vexes me to hear you saying aught to offend them. See that ye dinna fash them again." "Well, mother," I replied, "I do not want to vex you; but if ministers were less black crows than they are, my pop-gun would never ruffle a feather of their wings. Besides, one good turn deserves another. They have often come down upon me; and 'time about is fair play.' Moreover, you know what drink has done for many of them; and, while they are all worthy of honour for their work's sake, so long as they continue to give encouragement to drinking, they must just suffer a word of exhortation, though couched in words more plain than elegant." My mother shook her head, but said nothing, and so left it uncertain whether she agreed with what was said or not. Very likely she considered me a hopeless case. Certain it is that she never could be persuaded to hear me give an ad-

dress, being always afraid that she might hear something against ministers.

When I left the manse on the evening of the soiree, it was under the belief that not one of the company would grieve at my departure. This was a mistake; for one of them, a probationer, and a stranger to me, was an abstainer. From this gentleman I learned, many years afterwards, when I had become an agent of the Scottish Temperance League, that for four hours after I left he had to fight for me. Had I known there was such a friend present, who was to be so exposed, my stay would have been prolonged—the thirteen miles' walk notwithstanding.

Twenty years afterwards, when in the district where the soiree had been held, much of what I had said was remembered, and I found that the only other parties besides the ministers who had taken offence at my speech were the family of a publican, who since then have never again entered the church—the second-best thing they could have done! Is it not remarkable that the only parties to whom my speech gave offence were the publicans and the ministers?—The former engaged in a calling that beyond dispute has been proved the most debasing with which this or any other country has ever been cursed—the latter, in a work the highest and holiest in which man can engage. Such a phenomenon indicated that there was “something rotten in the State of Denmark.” Had such not been the case, what offended the publicans should have pleased the ministers. The fact that both were offended may be taken as a modern illustration

of the possibility of Sodom and Jerusalem being both implicated in one form of iniquity, and therefore both equally offended when reminded of their duty.

It is but just to say that, while a long experience has assured me of the truth of the common saying, "Ministers are but men," my respect for these men, as a class, has increased with increasing years. From no other class have I received more kindness; and to it I am indebted, under God, for what knowledge I possess of the great leading principles of Divine truth, more than to any other source. This, however, is no reason why I should be hindered from exposing whatever nonsense any of the class may say about the Temperance question.

A short time after I became an abstainer, Rechabitism was introduced. A *Tent* was opened in Hawick; and nothing would serve my friend Brown, but that I should become a Rechabite. I consented, and remained in connection with the order until it entirely collapsed, which it did not a day too soon for the good of the Temperance cause, inasmuch as the time of many of our most active men was taken up with *tent* business, to the neglect of the general work. I always think of the *rosettes* and *sashes* worn by the brotherhood on gala days as the most childish things ever indulged in by men whose brains were clear of alcohol. Repenting of this our temperance folly, let us hope that posterity will not be too hard upon us.

In 1839, Mr. James Johnston—a young man who took

the pledge of abstinence along with me—and I started a Sabbath school in the parish. It was held in my house. In 1840, we formed a library in connection with the school, and were greatly assisted by the “Religious Tract Society” granting books at a nominal price. In the course of a short time we had from two to three hundred volumes in the library. In 1842, being laid up with small-pox, the children could not meet in my house. In these circumstances, my friend, Mr. Johnston, thought there would be no difficulty in securing the parish school for a few Sabbaths. My thoughts were very different; but full of faith and hope, he determined to try. Try he did, but was told that the Sabbath school was a public nuisance, and that the parish school would not be granted for any such purpose. This was just what I had expected; but to my honest unsuspecting friend it was a surprise of no ordinary kind.

The year 1843 came, and with it the Disruption, which had a wonderful effect in producing revolutions in the minds of some men. Calculating upon the possibility of its having wrought a change on the minds of those who had previously thought Sabbath schools a nuisance, I went, in 1844, and renewed our request for the use of the parish school; and this time it was most cordially granted. Accordingly, the Sabbath school library was removed from my house to the parish school-room. Two elders of the establishment became Sabbath school teachers, and everything went on pleasantly; and now, in 1865, it is gratifying to know that, instead of the school-room, the Sabbath

school meets in the parish church, with the Rev. Mr. Smith, parish minister, acting as superintendent. Thus, that which at one time was looked upon as a nuisance, is now considered an excellent institution in the parish.

About the same time we started what was equally novel in the parish—a prayer meeting. A suitable place having been obtained, due intimation was given of our intention. The first night, the place of meeting—the house of Mrs. Hall, widow of Mr. James Hall, a godly man, who had been long an elder of the Rev. Mr. Dobie's church—was filled. The services consisted of devotional exercises and reading a portion of Scripture. This plan was continued for some time, till one night Mr. Robert Linton, a travelling merchant, well known in the district, attended our meeting and gave an address. On our way home, Mr. Linton said, "Well, George, that is a very fine meeting, and the people appear to be interested; but you will find that, unless you adopt some other plan of conducting it, they will not continue to turn out so well." I very naturally asked what he would have us do? "Well," he replied, "in a place like this it would hardly do for you to speak from a text, because very likely it would be considered out of all order, and many would be sure to think you uttered unsound doctrine; but I'll tell you what you can do. You are hearing Mr. Dobie every Sabbath; you can take his text, and inform the meeting that you purpose giving heads and particulars, and what more you can remember of the sermon. They will never think of finding fault; you

will in this way get said what you think proper, and no doubt you will get on, and good be done." I took a hearty laugh at the suggestion of my friend ; because nothing so wild had ever entered my head as attempting to repeat at night a sermon that I had heard during the day. One Sabbath afternoon, Mr. Linton's suggestion came to mind : I made the attempt, and succeeded beyond expectation. I continued the practice at our meetings for seven years. Mr. Linton, however, was wrong in thinking that no one would find fault ; for one of our elders went to Mr. Dobie, requesting him to interfere, and to put a stop to such a practice. His reply was just what I would have expected,—“Would that all my people were preachers ; go you and preach too, and let George thunder away as he likes.”

Addressing that prayer meeting for seven years was the best school that, in the circumstances, could have been obtained for fitting me for the work in which since then I have been engaged. Great truths were impressed on my mind in a manner that otherwise, in all probability, they never would have been ; and it gave me practice in speaking. Verily the Lord was leading me by a way that I knew not of.

Respect for truth makes it necessary to refer to a part of my temperance life which I would willingly have passed over. From convictions forced upon me by reading and study, the conclusion was reached, that if intoxicating drink was to be banished from any quarter, it should be from the table of the Lord.

Nothing perhaps assisted me to this conclusion more than a pamphlet by the Rev. Peter Mearns, now of Coldstream, and another entitled "Tirosh-la-yain." Many a discussion upon this point I had with my beloved minister, Mr. Dobie, who did his best to draw my mind away from it. Perhaps he thought I was getting into too deep waters, and might run a risk of being drowned. When he was residing near Annan, for the benefit of his health, in the summer of 1844, I paid him a visit, and when at tea the subject was discussed so warmly that we never got the second cup finished. An eccentric, but good sort of man present, who had listened for two hours, apparently with great interest, to all that had been said on both sides, at length broke silence by saying, very seriously, "Gentlemen, will you allow me a word?" We both paused, thinking he was going to throw light on the subject, when, behold, all he had to say was to remind us that we had neglected to return thanks for our tea. This came so unexpectedly upon us that we took a hearty laugh. The discussion was allowed to drop, and was never again renewed between us, for, in 1845, Mr. Dobie died; but my convictions of the impropriety of using alcoholic wine at the communion remained unshaken; and when it was celebrated, in the summer of 1845, I and several others—all acting without consulting each other—passed the cup. When this became known, hostile feelings rose against us mountains high, and torrents of indignation came down upon us hot and heavy. Of course we were called to account. Ministers and elders tried hard to convince us of our

great error. But while they dealt kindly with us, anything they were able to advance against our views only went to convince me that these views were right, and that those who opposed them had not an inch of ground to stand upon.

Determined to prove that it was not without good reason we had acted as we had done, we who had passed the cup purchased a bottle of the same liquid as had been used at the communion, and also a bottle of preserved juice of the grape, and sent both to Mr. Kemp, chemist, Edinburgh, to be analyzed. The bottle of port contained nineteen per cent. of alcohol, whilst in the preserved juice of the grape no traces of that poison could be found. This was good news; and in our simplicity we thought it was only necessary to lay the analysis before the session to secure what we wanted—the fruit of the vine—instead of the alcoholic filthy compound we had been receiving. We were sadly mistaken. They treated us with all courtesy, but would not yield: we were either to submit to use and wont, or go somewhere else. After two years' discussion, we agreed to use, under protest, what we had proved to have no more right to be called the fruit of the vine than the ink with which this is written. Our protest, which was couched in pretty strong language, was laid before the session on the Saturday previous to the summer communion of 1848, when I was unable to be present. It did not satisfy them; and they thought proper to write one for us, to which the others adhibited their names. When I reached church on Sabbath, I learned what had been

done, and, of course, did not communicate—as it was not some other person's protest, but our own, to which I was prepared to adhibit my name. A short time after this I applied for baptism for a child, but to my surprise was told by our newly ordained minister that I must first sign the protest that had been written for us. This I would not submit to do. He then suggested that Mrs. Easton could have the child baptized, little knowing what were the feelings such a suggestion was fitted to kindle in my mind. It did appear strange that I should be denied church privileges because I refused to partake of intoxicating drink at the table of the Lord, while others who were frequently staggering under the power of drink were receiving them. I said nothing, however, as I was convinced that the session, having got my brethren satisfied, were not caring though they got quit of me; and this they did. I found elsewhere the privileges they had refused.

The above is the only step ever taken in connection with the Temperance movement, on account of which I have the smallest regret. Not that I in the least doubt the soundness of the views for which we then contended—the very reverse is the case; but because the step we took was premature, and more fitted, considering the ignorance that prevailed on the subject, to postpone than to hasten the day when the “fruit of the vine,” instead of a noxious compound, should be taken to symbolize the blessings of the Gospel Feast. It is very satisfactory to me to know that at least one of the largest U. P. Churches in Glasgow has adopted

the course for which we then contended. Let us have patience and work on; it does move, though slowly. Long ago have I forgiven those who manifested anything but sympathy with me in my convictions, and trust they also have forgiven me for trying to obtain what was right and proper in a way that may be styled injudicious. It is good to be zealously affected in a good work; but it is well that our zeal should be combined with the wisdom of the serpent, as well as the harmlessness of the dove.

The reader may very easily suppose that the "Radical" tendencies of my nature did not raise me in the estimation of those with whom the will of the Laird is the alpha and omega. The climax of my offending was reached on my persisting to address temperance meetings. This, more than anything, roused the indignation of those clothed in a little brief authority. It was not to be endured that a working-man should take up his head with public questions. To work, eat, and sleep, and act the sycophant, was the sum-total of *his* duty. To act otherwise was far more outrageous than to be carted home in a state of drunken insensibility. Accordingly, I was told more than once by my superior, that he was instructed by the Honourable the Trustees to inform me, that if I did not desist from going here and there, addressing public meetings, I should lose my situation. This, instead of deterring me, only made me more determined, and on one occasion drew from me the declaration, "that he might go and tell the Trustees that with what talents

God had given me I would plead the cause of temperance, in defiance of them and of all the little despots that lived." And I did so, the remonstrance of friend and foe notwithstanding, until what I had been warned of came upon me. A few weeks before Whitsunday, 1849, intelligence reached me that my situation had passed to another. This came upon me at the time somewhat unexpectedly, and at first I thought it rather uncourteous treatment from parties to whom I had wrought like a slave for more than twenty years. They were, however, the unconscious instruments of freeing me from despotism and drudgery, that I might go forth and enjoy not only liberty of thought, but liberty of speech and action.

So far as riches were concerned, I had less than nothing—the only property possessed being a healthy constitution, a wife, seven children, and a dozen temperance speeches. No time was to be lost. The term was at hand, and a cover for the family must be found. Nevertheless, I felt quite composed, and ready to take the consequences. A text Mr. Dobie very frequently quoted,—“Acknowledge the Lord in all thy ways, and He will direct thy steps”—came very forcibly to my mind; and also a favourite way he had of expressing the same truth,—“When difficulties press upon you, go and tell God; and if He does not deliver you out of them, He will give you grace to bear them.” I at once retired to a quiet glen immediately behind my dwelling, and, lying down upon the green grass, prayed God that, if consistent with His will, He would open up a way whereby I might be able to provide for my

family, and be at liberty to advocate the claims of temperance. If ever prayer of mine was answered, that was.

Cromwell said, "Trust the Lord, and keep your powder dry." Having prayed that God would open up a way, it was now my duty to take steps towards it. The first thing done was to write my friend Brown, informing him of what had happened, and requesting him to find me a situation. The letter being despatched, I walked right off, a distance of twenty miles, to Lockerbie, near which my dear mother resided, and there secured a house. On returning, I found a letter from Brown, with the information that he had secured a situation for me on the railway, and that I must enter upon it as soon as possible. The dark cloud was rending, and rays of light were shining through.

The term soon arrived; and I bade farewell to the locality where I had spent my boyhood, as well as riper years. In leaving, it was a pleasing reflection that whatever charges my bitterest enemies might bring against me, that of having lived an idle life could not be one. To some I had been a willing drudge; and, but for prudential considerations, my own simplicity and the grinding selfishness of some others would now have been exposed. Still I left behind me many loving friends, who, to serve me, would not have counted as too much anything that they could do. The "auld kirkyard," too, was the resting-place of a kind father and loving sister; and beside these, since then, the remains of the best and most affectionate of mothers have been laid; so that, even yet, after the lapse of sixteen years, when the parish

of Ewes is named, many hallowed associations start up that bind me to it more than to any other locality. My geographical knowledge of it is complete. Every nook and corner into which the pure stream wimples through its rural vale is as familiar almost as my own fireside; and my heart grows young again as I think of the time when, with my playmates, we "*gumped*" the silvery trout from its transparent waters. On every rood of road that passes through it I have dined upon humble fare, with a relish sweeter than that enjoyed by kings.

As soon as my family was comfortably put up at Lockerbie, I went on to Hawick, and found a lodging with my tried friend, Mr. Brown. Very soon afterwards I was installed into the office of a "ganger" on the railway. I had been long accustomed to this kind of work in bygone years, and had much pleasure in it; perhaps from a conceit that few could set a squad of men to work to greater advantage—taking more work out of them, and yet retaining their respect. Any one wishing to manage this should show that, when necessary, he is not afraid to work himself. "Come, my lads, let us go at it!" must ever be more powerful than "Go at it, men!" Railway work and workers form no exception to this rule.

Railway work is often represented as being very severe. My short experience of it led to a very different conclusion. Compared with the work of making roads, it is very easy. No one can more easily put on the appearance of being hard at work, and all the while do very little, than a regular bred navvy. Had her Ma-

jesty's highways cost as much in proportion as railways, there are certain trustees who would have been deeper in debt than they are, and many poor fellows would have escaped working in a way that none except the vilest convicts should be called upon to work.

The men under my charge were soon made aware that I was an abstainer; and the good effects of precept and example were not long in showing themselves among them. In a little while many of them had new boots and trousers, &c. There is no comparing of the increased influence for good that an abstainer in such circumstances exercises with the little one can do, if complying with and encouraging the men in taking drink. Contractors would do well, for their own pecuniary interests, were they giving double wages to secure abstaining "gangers." They little suspect in how many ways they are robbed by their foremen who drink, and encourage the men under them to do likewise.

Although, when I entered the railway service, I had been warned against going and addressing public meetings, and had been told that such a practice would not be suffered, I was very soon at the old work, in Hawick and elsewhere, and no person was stupid enough to find fault.

Shortly after entering upon my new situation, there appeared in the newspapers an advertisement for a Missionary, by the Edinburgh Total Abstinence Society. Mr. James Gray, a friend of mine, and an abstainer, well known in Hawick, had gone to reside in Edinburgh, and had recommended me to the friends there. He

also wrote to the friends in Hawick, urging them by all means to persuade me to apply. Being ignorant of missionary work, and well pleased with my situation, I at first treated the matter lightly. Letters, however, were received from various friends urging me to apply, and I yielded to their request. By return of post I received a letter informing me that, on a given Tuesday night in July, my trial address must be delivered in the presence of the Committee of the Edinburgh Society. Never shall I forget my first impressions of Edinburgh, when passing from the Waverley station up the Flesh-market Close, where public-house signboards were hanging from almost every building. The thought pressed itself home, that if this close were a sample of those in which a missionary was expected to visit, some one else ought to be appointed.

At Mr. George Johnstone's Temperance Hotel, Nicolson Street, I met with Mr. W. B. Turnbull, now minister of St. Mary's Church, Dumfries, who was also a candidate. After a little familiar intercourse, we went to have a view of the city from the Calton Hill. Never having been in a large town or city before, the view was perfectly bewildering. Never had I felt such a deep sense of self-insignificance, as when looking for the first time upon the glorious old city, and thinking upon its many historical associations. When silence was broken, it was to say, "Turnbull, let us be off to our hotel; for if we stand here much longer, not a temperance idea will be left in my head!" so we made our retreat as quickly as possible. The time of meeting came. Mr. Neil M'Neill, president, took the chair; I

was first called upon, and Mr. Turnbull followed ; but he was hardly left a fair share of time, the chairman and the first speaker having taken more than their's. On the following day, Mr. Turnbull and I parted, not having much reason to think we should ever meet again. The experience of the previous day left neither desire nor hope of being the successful candidate ; but Providence had ordered it otherwise; for, two weeks afterwards, notice reached me of my having been elected, the engagement to commence on the 29th of August. My own inclination was to abide where I was, but the entreaty of friends at Hawick and elsewhere forced me to a full consideration of all the circumstances, and then one path alone seemed open, which was to go to Edinburgh. Before bidding farewell to my many dear friends in Hawick, with whom I had been so long associated in temperance work, they were kind enough to present me with a number of valuable books. After having spent a day with my family, I started for Edinburgh on the morning of August 29th, 1849, and in the evening found myself in Drummond Street Hall, surrounded by a number of friends who had come together to bid me welcome. The proceedings of that evening are still fresh on my memory. I felt anything but comfortable, and had a lurking desire to be back to the green hills of my native county. Among the many incidents and sayings of the evening, I was never more surprised than when Mr. John Anderson, afterwards, and for many years, an agent of the Scottish Temperance League, rose and sung the following song, composed by himself :—

Air—DONALD CAIRD.*Chorus.*

Geordie Easton's come to town,
 Geordie Easton's come to town :
 Publicans may fret and frown,
 Geordie Easton's come to town.

Drouthy elders weel may greet,
 Now their mous they daurna weel ;
 If they touch or taste again,
 Geordie's on them might and main.
 Soon, like cobwebs frae the wa',
 A' their shams he'll sweep awa' ;
 By the plate and by ye're post,
 Sign the pledge, and save the lost !
 Geordie Easton, &c.

Up among the hills he grew,
 One of nature's chosen few ;
 Deeply read in stream and sky,
 Wise in knowledge from on high.
 On the highway, day by day,
 Pick in hand, he wrought away.
 Every fountain, leaf, and flower
 Gave him wisdom—brought him power.
 Geordie Easton, &c.

Ye wha sell the drug of death,
 Watch! for Geordie means ye skaith;
 Sorrow's sob and hunger's wail
 Hurl on you his patriot flail.
 Cheat and scheme, ye knaves, awhile,
 Soon your traffic he will spoil;
 Soon we hope to hear your groans,
 Sweeping streets and breaking stones.
 Geordie Easton, &c.

See him by the yill-house stand !
There his notes are wild and grand ;
Wit and sense, like loaded guns,
Scatter death among the tuns.
Harsh or gentle, low or loud,
Scotland of her son is proud ;
Long may city, mount, and glen
Claim the Chief of Temperance Men.

Geordie Easton's come to town,
Geordie Easton's come to town :
Publicans may fret and frown,
Geordie Easton's come to town.

At the time of my entering upon my new work, the Edinburgh Society had two missionaries, Messrs. M'Donald and Murray, and Mr. Rose as Collector. The Committee instructed Mr. M'Donald to initiate me into the mysteries of domiciliary visitation. No description can convey to the mind an adequate idea of the misery and wickedness that exist in large cities. To obtain anything like a correct idea of their depth and virulence, one must go and grapple with and try to arrest them. When engaged in that work, arguments in favour of abstinence were to be found every day, such as I had never dreamt of. A minister on one occasion complained, in my hearing, that his people had not built him a new church, as he had expected. I ventured to remark, in a free, friendly manner, that were they to give up drinking they might soon build a church. This roused him at once ; and, addressing me, he said, "If you have called to talk about your abstinence crotchet, let me tell you I don't wish to be bored in any way about it ;" and lifting his

hand, he brought it down upon a Bible, saying, "I cannot find an argument in that book from beginning to end in favour of abstinence." "Perhaps not,"* I said; "but if you will go and visit for three weeks in the wynds and closes of Edinburgh, you may be able to find some there." Others may have hated abstinence as much as this man did; but it is very doubtful whether another could be found whose hatred would so readily have burst into a blaze of anger the moment it was mentioned.

After spending some weeks visiting along with Mr. M'Donald, the northern part of the city was fixed upon by the Committee as my field of labour. It was some time before I felt at home. Somehow or other, it appeared to me quite ridiculous that I should be walking about every day with my coat on. The idea that the service rendered was not sufficient for the wages received had a most depressing influence; and I cannot describe my feelings when the summer and harvest passed away without having had a sweating at either scythe or sickle. It is long ago, now, since I got quit of all such nonsense.

The Committee had it in the *bond* that six hours a day were to be spent in visiting, and that a journal of our proceedings was to be kept. Keeping a journal was a possible thing, but not the six hours' arrangement. All rule about hours for a missionary is vain. If he is worthy of his office, he will soon find that he

* None of my readers will suppose that I meant to admit that there are no arguments to be found in the Bible in favour of abstinence.

cannot be tied to hours; and if he is not worthy, you cannot tie him. Missionary experience, even for only twelve months, finds its emphatic utterance in "*Haste to the rescue!*"

A few of the more striking things which were forced upon my attention may be mentioned: For instance, the number of persons met with in the most miserable condition, who at one time had been members and office-bearers in churches, and had occupied good social positions in life, both in the city and elsewhere, but who had been brought down by drink, was appalling. It is painful to think how many illustrations of this are recorded in my journal. Let me give one:—One day I visited an old man, who followed the occupation of a cobbler. He was a very kind sort of man, and readily entered into conversation, when he stated that for eight or nine years he had been an abstainer. Being much pleased with his genial manner, I frequently called and told him how the work was succeeding; but though I felt very anxious to know his antecedents, I did not care directly to inquire. One day, however, when we were speaking of the evil *drink* had done, and the good that had in so many instances resulted from *abstinence*, he said, "Yes, I know well both the one and the other; I may tell you, sir, that at one time I had a shoe-shop in the Lawnmarket, with stock to the value of from two to three thousand pounds, and did an excellent business. Well, sir, at that time I was one of nineteen—all of whom occupied similar social positions in life—who met every day in a certain tavern at one o'clock, and had our tumbler together, and for

an hour discussed the topics of the day ; and now, sir, I am the only one out of the number that is left. The others are dead ; they were all ruined by drink, and it is not too much to say they killed themselves with drinking ; and I, too, was ruined by the same means ; and had it not been that I met with Mr. M'Lean and other abstainers, who took an interest in me, no doubt I would have been killed too. But, thank God, sir, I escaped, although only by a hair's breadth ; and though now in very humble circumstances I am happier than ever." The above is but a sample of what will be frequently met with by any missionary every week. How very truthful is the following from *Blind Bartimeus*:—"Do you mark the impudent leer of that mean boy ; pretending sympathy, he comes up and drops into the trembling hand of a blind beggar a pebble ; or that still meaner boy,—he drops in that which, when the trembling hand closes upon it, pierces or stings it, and, laughing loudly in the blind, bewildered face, runs away. And thus the gay polished world puts a sparkling cup to the young man's lip ; but when it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder, that same world jeers at his imprudence, and turns him from its door. His excesses, and agony, and death must not be seen there."

As strikingly illustrative of this, it may be mentioned that my brother missionary, Mr. M'Donald, on one occasion laid in a pauper's grave a man who had been one of, and had kept company with, the aristocracy of the city. Thus does the fashionable world make drink-victims of men, and afterwards thrust them down to herd with the vulgar throng ; at the same

time treating with contempt the efforts made by abstainers to save such from eternal ruin.

People speak of the drunkenness of the working-class, and of the consequent misery to which many of them are subjected—and what they say is quite true; but probably there is as large a proportion of the class above them dragged down by drink to the most abject condition. And, as a general rule, it will be found that the man who falls from the drawing-room is more helpless and hopeless than he who falls from the joiner's bench or smithy anvil.

Another matter of surprise was the number of wives who, although cursed with drunken husbands, raged like furies when urged to become abstainers. In many instances, when the propriety of their doing so was suggested, they would break out into a perfect rhapsody—"What call have I to take the pledge? Do you mean to insinuate, sir, that I have need to do such a thing? No person ever saw me drunk: I can take a glass and let it alone, as I like, and I am not going to bind myself with your pledge. It is a poor silly affair when folks cannot temperate themselves without pledges."

The wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove are specially needed when dealing with such ignorant stupidity. It would have served no good purpose to argue the question with them; on the contrary, it would only have brought down a more terrible torrent of words. At the expense of laying a tremendous tax upon my patience, there was no help for it but to treat them in the kindest manner possible; and yet with all that I very often did not succeed.

It is perfectly astonishing what some wives are willing to suffer rather than give up taking drink, though by doing so they would have assisted their drunken husbands to abstain.

My experience is, that it is much easier to persuade the husband to abstain for the sake of the wife, than *vice versa*; while the most powerful argument with either in favour of abstinence is, as formerly stated, an appeal to them for the sake of their children. If that was not sufficient to gain them over, it was of little use beginning to give them the true definition of temperance, or to talk to them on the *wine question*, or on physiology, or on any other *ology*. These are not the parties to be influenced by the discussion of such topics. There was one very intimate friend of my own who for twenty years had heard much said in favour of abstinence, but had never become an abstainer till after he was married, and had a family. His experience was thus given:—"Easton, I never saw the force of the arguments in favour of abstinence until my *bairns* were running about, and then I could withstand them no longer."

Another thing learned in the mission-field, which had not been anticipated by me, was the difficulty of reclaiming a woman after she has become degraded by drink. I only know two whom, during this year, I was instrumental in reclaiming; and surely there is good ground for considering these as reclaimed, inasmuch as they have now been abstainers for fifteen years. It is very different with men; but even as regards them, the number reclaimed was very small, compared

with the large number operated upon. Facts prove that abstinence is possessed of power to rescue the drunkard; but they also prove that in many cases *the power* of the poor victim to hold by it has been so destroyed that he lets it slip, and perishes. Of what avail is it to throw a rope, however strong it may be, to a drowning man, whose hands are so benumbed that he cannot keep hold of it.

It is as a preventive, rather than as a cure, that abstinence is to be admired and recommended. All experience proves that the great work of temperance reformers is to get men persuaded to embrace abstinence while they have the power to hold it fast. No doubt there are men possessed of strong wills, who, although they have become drunkards, will hold on in the face of all opposition, if you once get them to agree to abstain; but the great majority of men are not so constituted; and at all events, surrounded as they are with temptation, the work of reclamation is extremely difficult. From this we are taught the great importance of warning the young never to tamper with the deceptive drug, the nature of which is to create an appetite it has no power to satisfy, and which, when once created, is only surpassed in its relentless character by death itself; and, above all, to secure their parents as their teachers in this matter. It is all very well to cry, "Let us secure the young, and the old will soon die out;" but how can this be done when, on their return from a meeting, the members of the "Band of Hope" see their parents drinking. Of course our duty is to "sow beside all waters;" but experience teaches

that those who have grown up from childhood as abstainers are, as a general rule, the children of abstaining parents. It is quite possible to have a large "Band of Hope," composed chiefly of children whose parents are not abstainers; but it is hardly to be expected that many of these will remain faithful. Hence, I have always considered that the securing of two respectable parents to the cause is a far greater gain for permanent good than enrolling fifty children whose parents are not with us. It is quite true that by teaching the children abstinence the parents are sometimes reached; but when that is not accomplished, our labour with the former is in a great measure lost. The correctness of this opinion may easily be tested by any conductor of a "Band of Hope." Let him inquire what has become of the members of ten years ago, and he will find that most of those whose parents have continued to drink have succumbed before the drinking customs. Still he will have the consolation that he did what he could to prevent this—a consolation that the Sabbath School teacher who drinks cannot enjoy when he reads of the large proportion of the inmates of our jails who in early life were taught in Sabbath Schools, and who have been sent there through drink.*

Another thing I soon learned was, that as, on the one hand, it is of great importance that the Gospel Missionary be able to inculcate abstinence, so, on the other hand, a Temperance Missionary requires in some measure to be able to point out with great plainness

* See an excellent tract, entitled *Sabbath Schools Robbed*, published by Tweedie, 337 Strand, London.

the way of salvation from the guilt, power, and pollution of all sin, as there are cases frequently turning up when the Gospel message of salvation is the only suitable topic. If it could be shown that a Temperance Missionary, by talking nonsense, undid the work of the Gospel Missionary as thoroughly as I have known the latter undo the work of the former, any committee would be justified in handing him his dismissal. "What God has joined, let no man put asunder."

The following is an illustration of the mischief a good man did by an unguarded speech:—Conversing one day with the wife of a man who had been a reformed drunkard for seven years, but who had relapsed, I asked if she knew what had caused his fall. "Oh yes," she said, "I know very well what caused his fall: A missionary who laboured in this district—a very good man, I have no doubt—often called upon us; but whenever the Temperance cause was mentioned, he spoke very lightly of it, and often assured us that if God's grace did not keep us sober, all pledges like that of abstinence never would. Well, sir, our man and he became very intimate, and he began to think that after all the missionary was right, and so he began to take bitter beer, and from that to take drink of every kind; and now, sir, as you see, he is as bad as ever."

Charity inclines to the belief that the missionary spoke as he did for the purpose, as he thought, of magnifying the grace of God. No doubt he knew that the grace of God that bringeth salvation teacheth

us "that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world;" and, had he not been woefully ignorant, he might have known that the only sobriety the reformed drunkard can act upon with safety is abstinence from drink. Had he considered this, as he ought to have done, he would have advised the man to trust God's grace, and shun every appearance of evil; and, above all, to abstain from drink. Such an advice would have been similar to that given by Paul,—“Except ye abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.” By this advice Paul did not disparage the grace of God. How very important it is that every man who seeks the salvation of souls should be able to say to the reformed drunkard,—“Except ye abide by abstinence from all intoxicating drink, ye are all but certain to go to ruin.” Had the missionary referred to told the man to hold on by abstinence, and trust God to assist him in working out his own salvation—not only from one sin, but from all, never forgetting that it was God that wrought in him, both to will and to do of His good pleasure—he would have spoken like one who knew something of the adaptation of Bible teaching to the circumstances of a reformed drunkard, as well as to those of the sober man; but to speak as he did was not only foolish but ruinous. If ever the Prince of Evil indulges in a sarcastic laugh, surely it must be when a herald of the cross tells a man who has been a drunkard, to trust God's grace to keep him sober, and never trouble himself with “Abstinence” as a rule of his daily life.

Thinking that possibly the man might be reclaimed, I took him under my special charge; and certainly there was not another for whom I did so much while in the mission field; but it was all in vain. He went on from bad to worse, until he had pawned or sold every tool out of his workshop; and ultimately, when his wife was confined to bed, with her baby a few days old by her side, he took the last pillow in his house from beneath her head, and sold it for drink. His brutality to his wife became so horrible that there was no alternative but, unknown to him, to remove her and the infant to lodgings, which had been provided for them through the assistance of a benevolent gentleman who was acquainted with the whole case. Poor woman, her heart more than half-broken from the usage she had received, and labouring under great bodily weakness, it was not many days until it was thought best to secure a nurse for the child, and take the mother to the infirmary, where, in the course of three weeks, she died. Three months after that the child died also; but the husband still lives a miserable victim to drink, forsaken by all his children, who have now grown to man and woman's estate, and are doing well.

The prophet Isaiah puts the question, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the fruit of her womb?" and he supplies an answer,—“Yea, they may forget.” Just as if he had said, “It is not at all probable that a mother will forget her sucking child, for her affection for her offspring is very tender and lasting; still, the thing is possible—

she may forget." In the mission field I found it standing before me a great and horrible fact.

It is not difficult to conceive it possible that a mother, living in the dark places of the earth, which are full of deeds of horrid cruelty, should forget her infant, and that its plaintive cries should fail to move her compassion; but one is disposed to believe that in a country like ours, were it not for *drink*—cursed drink—such a thing would be unknown. Notwithstanding the hallowing influences we enjoy in having the Sun of Righteousness shining upon, if not into us all, such a terrible phenomenon—the direct result of drink—is by no means rare. Take one illustration of this out of many that came under my notice:—

At the top of a flight of stairs I once entered a room, rendered dark from the fact that bundles of rags and old hats were occupying the place of glass. There was light sufficient to see that the right thing was not in the right place. Having pulled a bundle out of the window, I saw that a child, about four years of age, all covered with small-pox, was lying in a corner upon a little straw, with no covering but a dirty shawl. Though no mortal ear was present to hear but the child, I cried out, "God pity the poor bairn! Something must be done, and that immediately." On asking a neighbour if she knew anything of the mother, she said, "She has been drinking, sir, for the last week, and when she came in last night she abused the poor thing very badly." The inspector of poor was brought to see the child, and he went at once to order a doctor. A policeman was also made aware of

the whole affair, and entered the house almost as soon as the doctor. When, with the assistance of a neighbour woman, we were getting the child made as comfortable as possible, the mother came in drunk, and began to curse us most heartily for interfering with her child. It was very fortunate that a policeman formed one of our number. Addressing the drunken mother, he said, "My good woman, if that child die, you will be committed and tried for your life." A benevolent lady furnished two night-dresses for the child; but in the course of a few days the wretched mother sold one of them for drink.

"Can the fond mother e'er forget
The infant whom she bore?"

Yes; through drink it is not only possible, but in thousands of instances it is done. Nor is it at all surprising that such should be the case, for one of the properties of drink is to destroy natural affection.*

Having thus noticed a few of those things which more especially surprised me when I entered upon, and while I prosecuted, the work of a temperance missionary, I shall return to my narrative.

At Martinmas, 1849, my family came to Edinburgh; and, houses being scarce, we had to take one in Cowan's Close—a locality between which and the one they had been accustomed to, the contrast was as great as could be well conceived. In the course of six months, however, we removed to 54 South Bridge. Still, for the

* See Appendix A.

first twelve months of our residence in Edinburgh, we were scarcely a week free from sickness.

On the 8th of July, 1850, I visited Glasgow for the first time, for the purpose of attending the annual meetings of the Scottish Temperance League—having been requested to be one of the speakers on that occasion. The chair was occupied by the Rev. T. C. Wilson, Dunkeld, and addresses were delivered by the Rev. Joseph Brown, the Rev. Mr. Longmuir, and the Rev. Mr. Haworth, all of whose speeches were reported at the time in the *Scottish Temperance Review*; and it is added that Messrs. Stirling and Easton subsequently addressed the meeting in a humorous and effective manner. There had been some slight reflections thrown out upon those who were considered to hold extreme views on the temperance question, or who took what in one sense is considered higher ground than expediency. Believing, as I did, that there was other ground than that of expediency quite tenable upon which the cause could be advocated; and never having had sufficient policy to keep back what particular ideas I held upon a subject, or of paying much attention to clothing these in the finest drapery, I apprehend they were on that occasion put forth in plain, coarse, substantial home-spun, so that, whatever humour there might be in my speech, it was by no means effective in raising me in the estimation of a good many of the occupants of the platform.

My speech was not reported; and perhaps it is as well that it was not. Reading it now might have caused a blush. Though not remembering much that

it contained, I have often since been reminded of it in such a manner that the conclusion forced upon me is that, in the judgment of a good many, there was something about its character rather outrageous. My views remain unchanged, whether the method of expressing them be changed or not. But I suspect that what a good many then repudiated as extreme, is now acknowledged by them as orthodox temperance teaching.

Shortly after the League meetings, the Committee of the Edinburgh Society awarded me a fortnight's holidays. It had been previously arranged that these should be spent in a visit to Lerwick, Shetland. Never having been on board a ship before, my sensations on sailing from Granton were anything but pleasant. Fortunately, the weather was fine, and the sea calm, so that by the time we had rounded the East Neuk of Fife I felt more comfortable. I stay not to describe the coast, to which, at the time, I was a stranger; but with which I am now as familiar as I am with my native county. On passing Peterhead we dashed through a forest of herring boats, and, never having seen such a sight before, I was much taken by surprise. The fleet of boats really appeared to me at a distance like an immense number of peculiarly shaped trees floating on the water. I did think we were far enough at sea when, in crossing the Moray Frith, we lost sight of land for a short time. Very soon the bleak, rugged coast of Caithness came in sight, and in due time we reached Wick—a place whose name was quite familiar to me, from what I had heard of its doings in behalf of the Temperance cause. Four hours

more brought us to Kirkwall, and other eight to Lerwick, where we arrived at 10 A.M. on Sabbath. Not having slept on the voyage, I was quite ready for bed when I got ashore. A cordial welcome was given me by the Committee of the Society; with many of whom friendships were then formed that still remain unbroken. An account of my labours in Lerwick appeared in the *Northern Ensign*, which I take the liberty of extracting.

“Mr. Easton, one of the Missionaries of the Edinburgh Temperance Association, having been permitted a cessation from his arduous duties in the metropolis, and to assist in renovating his health by a tour in the country, has visited the capital of Thule, where he has been proclaiming the evils of intemperance, and advocating successfully the abstinence cause to crowded audiences in the open air every evening at the Market Cross, during his sojourn here; and, by special request, in Scalloway and Tingwall through the day. So great was the desire to hear his address, that people of all ranks and denominations were punctual in attendance at the fixed hour, and the square adjoining the Cross was literally crammed, and every window within reach of hearing contained its quota of hearers. A hundred and forty new members have been enrolled during the week. On Wednesday, he delivered an address in the Independent Chapel, and formed a “Band of Hope.” On July 2d a soiree was held in honour of Mr. Easton’s visit to Zetland, when a number of the friends were present. After tea, Mr. Easton was presented by Mr. James Tulloch, in the name of the Committee, with a parcel of goods, consisting wholly of local manufacture, value fifty shillings, as a mark of their respect. During the day, Mr. Easton was waited on by a young lady belonging to the place, who presented him with two silk handkerchiefs as a token of respect for him and the cause he advocated. On Monday the

4th, Mr. Easton was also presented by several parties with many valuable tokens of the esteem in which he is held by them as a faithful advocate of the Temperance cause."

To describe manners and customs that obtain in different localities is foreign to my purpose, except as they may have reference to drinking. So far as that is concerned, I found humanity much the same in Lerwick as in Edinburgh, and, moreover, I found as much sound temperance intelligence in the one place as in the other. After a long experience, I am not able to say that I have ever met a more intelligent Committee than the thirteen men who at that time, and for many years after, composed the Lerwick one. Having laid the foundation of many a friendship that has become closer and more endearing with years, I left on the evening of the 4th of July, and thought, as we steamed out of the magnificent harbour, that if Lerwick had not benefited from me, I had from it; for really the friends had presented me with as many articles as would have gone a long way to assist in commencing a drapery business. Having reached home in safety, I had little more than resumed labour when there appeared in the newspapers an advertisement for an agent for the Scottish Temperance League. Acting on the advice of Mr. Thomas Knox, I wrote, applying for the situation, to my now long-tried friend, Mr. Robert Rae, who at that time was Secretary to the League. The application was successful. There had been, however, as I afterwards understood, a minority of the Board of Directors who would have preferred Mr. James Scott; some of them very likely

(from the speech which I delivered at the annual meeting) having arrived at the conclusion, that it would not be safe to let me loose upon the country, lest the cause should be damaged. In these circumstances the Board agreed to employ us both for six months, upon the principle, I suppose, of letting the thickest skin hold longest out. Accordingly, I received intimation from Mr. Rae that the Board had agreed to offer me a six months' engagement. I was not quite prepared at first to throw up my situation and accept such an offer. However, on maturer consideration, I decided to do so, and sent in my resignation to the Committee of the Edinburgh Society. My engagement with them terminated on the 29th of August, 1850; and on the 2d of September, which happened to be the anniversary of my birth, I had to attend a meeting of the League Directors in Glasgow, to receive instructions. I remember being amused by Mr. M'Gavin asking if I would have any objection to walk six or seven miles when there was no public conveyance—for such a distance at that time was to me a very small affair. I was also informed that they would expect me to address five meetings weekly, to which I readily agreed; and then came the advice, “not to say hard things about ministers.” This suggested the idea that there must have been more good reasons for such an advice than I had ever conceived. Still, I was somewhat reluctant to come under any obligation to put on stuffed gloves when dealing with any class of men that might say or do stupid things against our movement. One of the members of the Board—Mr. Neil M'Neill—

assisted me out of the difficulty by remarking,—“We do not mean that you are not to refer to ministers, but that, when doing so, you do it in a courteous manner.” “That is but dutiful,” I said: “only, telling the truth is sometimes considered very uncourteous.” The subject dropped; and they sent me forth to do the best I could.

On the evening of the same day, as reported in the *Scottish Temperance Review*, “a soiree was held in Johnstone’s Hotel, Nicholson Street, in honour of Mr. Easton, on the occasion of his translation from being one of the missionaries of the Edinburgh Abstinence Society to be one of the travelling agents of the Scottish Temperance League. Mr. Thomas Knox ably performed the duties of the chair, and in the name of the friends presented Mr. Easton with the undermentioned books,—Carpenter’s *Prize Essay on the Use and Abuse of Alcoholic Liquors*, Dunlop’s *Artificial and Compulsory Drinking Usages*, and Begg’s *Enquiry into the Extent and Cause of Juvenile Depravity*.”

My labours with the League were now begun. For a time they were confined to Edinburgh and the district around it; and the first place visited under its auspices was Haddington, which has caused me ever since to look upon that town with special interest.

On the 18th of October, 1850, Mr. James Scott and I attended the League Register Soiree, for the purpose of giving an account of our labours. This was the first and last time I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Scott as a brother agent; for, shortly after, he left the service of the League to prosecute his studies for the

ministry; and Mr. Stirling and I were left for some time to fight the battle ourselves. The first time I had the pleasure of meeting with Mr. Stirling, after engaging with the League, was at his own house at Milngavie. Being in Glasgow, I took a run out to see the honoured veteran of the good cause, and will never forget how firmly he grasped my hand, while the big tear rolled down his honest face, and said, "Oh, man, I am glad to see you, and right well pleased they have brought you into the field. I was just thinking God had sent you to take my place, for my work is nearly done." We spent two hours very happily together; and I took farewell of him, feeling much encouraged in, and strengthened for the work.*

It would be an endless task attempting to give an account of all my labours under the auspices of the League, during the last fifteen years; and there is no necessity, as these are pretty well known to all who have been paying any attention to what has been doing in behalf of the Temperance cause in Scotland. I will therefore content myself with giving a mere epitome of them, noticing a few incidents that have occurred during my travels, and whatever else may be likely to benefit the cause. During this long period I have enjoyed uninterruptedly good health, with the exception of now and again having a severe cold, which

* For an interesting account of the life and labours of this worthy man I would strongly recommend to any of my readers who have not seen it, a little book, entitled, *The Gloaming of Life*, written by the Rev. Alexander Wallace, D.D., and published by the Scottish Temperance League.

only once produced such a hoarseness as to compel me to rest for a few days, when Mr. Fish, missionary, Glasgow, very kindly took my appointments.

Having kept an accurate account for two years, it is no exaggeration to say that I have addressed 260 meetings yearly, and travelled 6,500 miles. At this rate I have in fifteen years addressed 3,900 meetings, and travelled nearly 100,000 miles in merely journeying from place to place, and not including necessary walking in the various towns and villages from Shetland to Solway.

Travelling so constantly, the reader will be apt to suppose that I must have had many a wet skin. Not so. Not more than six times have I been what would be called thoroughly wet. The only time I received such a ducking from rain that, had it been possible, it would have been prudent to have changed every stitch on my back, was when going between West Linton and Innerleithen. When leaving the former place, to walk to Penicuik to catch the coach, some person lent me an umbrella. Whether it was ever returned or not is uncertain. It was blowing a perfect hurricane—very fortunately on my back—and the rain was falling in torrents. My travelling bag and portable writing-desk were strapped on my back, and I did my best to keep the umbrella between me and the blast. In defiance of every effort, however, it was whirled right over my head, and turned inside out, while my hat went spinning along the hillside at the rate of apparently twenty miles an hour. I pursued as fast as possible; and but for a small loch of water into which

it was blown, I should never have overtaken it. Plunging right in, and stooping to catch my floating crown, the wind sent my travelling bag and desk right over my head, thus very nearly securing for me a complete immersion. With my hat in one hand, and broken umbrella in the other, I made my way to Penicuik, where I found shelter, as I have often done, at the fire-side of Mr. and Mrs. Temple. They provided me with a dry shirt, which they never saw again, and I bought a pair of stockings; but, alas! my boots were so soaked that I had to put them on minus the stockings. When I reached Innerleithen the meeting was assembled, and I went direct from the coach to the platform—speaking in a very watery condition, literally, it may be said, wrapped in a wet blanket. What I said that night might be called my hydropathic speech. After the meeting, my crack with our good friend, the Rev. Mr. Dobson, was brief, as I was too anxious to get to bed, so that some transformation might be wrought upon my clothes.

On another occasion I came in for a thorough ducking, but not with rain, when travelling per packet from Sandy to Kirkwall. We had our patience severely tested by a tedious passage, and were therefore late in reaching our destination. The packet, for some reason, could not land us. Two half-aquatics, in the shape of boys, came alongside with a coble to take us on shore. We stepped into it, and the little fellows set to work and pulled us alongside a large boat, over which we had to step before reaching land. To be free of all encumbrance, I pitched my travelling appar-

atus from me. In doing so I lost my equilibrium, and my hand coming down upon the large boat, pushed the coble from beneath me, and down I went into the water. Very fortunately, I was six feet in height, and the water a little less in depth, or there would have been a more serious submersion. As it was, in getting ashore, the only thing that had not come in for the benefit of a bath was my hat. Being the cold season of the year, I had on a top-coat and a Highland cloak over all, so that, from the weight of water that had soaked into the whole, there was no alternative but to stand for a short time until it should run off. Very fortunately, I had been lodging in Kirkwall for a few days a short time before, and had become very intimate with a fellow-lodger, Mr. M'Kenzie, a road surveyor. I at once made right away to the old quarters, when Mr. M'Kenzie opened his wardrobe and provided me with every necessary article of dress. True, they were deficient both in length and breadth; but, with a plentiful supply of cord, we tied them on, while a Highland cloak he had covered all shortcomings; and instead of being injured, I was perhaps as much refreshed by my bath as by a Turkish one, for which, on one occasion I had to pay pretty smartly. On the following morning, when my clothes had been dried, it was evident from their grey appearance that they had been salted; but whether it would tend to their preservation was very doubtful.

A few days after the above mishap I had to cross Holm Sound. When I reached the ferry there was a woman sitting who was also desirous of crossing, but

whose finances were run short. She requested liberty to cross under my patronage, to which, of course, there was no objection. It was a gusty sort of day, and just when we had got about half-way across there came a "crack" of wind that well-nigh upset the boat. The woman cried, "Lord, have mercy on us!" and I inwardly responded, "Amen :—" for most assuredly it looked very much as if my many wanderings were at an end. But the boatmen, who, in Orkney, are noted for expertness, had the sail down as quickly as the wind had come upon us, and thanks to them and a kind Providence we were preserved. There was one other occasion when my life, along with that of others, was in danger. Having to travel from Lockerbie to Corrie, a distance of six or seven miles, it was arranged between Messrs. John Jardine and Douglas, of Lockerbie, and myself, that we should hire a conveyance, Mr. Douglas to act as driver. On our way to Corrie everything went well with us; and we had an excellent meeting, which I addressed from a thrashing machine; but on our return, when we were descending an incline within a few miles of Lockerbie, the machine, from the horse not having been properly yoked, came upon the animal, and away it set like a mad creature. Mr. Douglas being unable to restrain it, I took the reins, thinking I would be able to bring it up; but it was all in vain. My first thought was to try and run the carriage up against the hedge, and thereby perpetrate a smash, and get quit of the horse; but I dared not venture upon the experiment. My next idea was—and upon this I acted—to keep the horse on the road, and give it head, so that

when we reached a hill that lay before us, it might be exhausted, and more easily brought to a stand. The plan succeeded; but, when Mr. Douglas and I stepped down from the carriage, Jardine was, to our horror, awanting. We concluded that he must be lying on the road killed, or at least with broken limbs; but, as we were speaking, we noticed by the light of the moon a person coming along who, to our great deliverance, turned out to be our friend, hale and sound. He had leaped out; but how he escaped being injured was a mystery to us all. After this occurrence, I laid it down as a rule, not to be departed from, never to go out with a horse unless a qualified man be sent in charge—a rule worthy the attention of all travellers.

A very short time in the service of the League was sufficient to satisfy me that Sabbath evening is the best of all the week for securing a large meeting, and affords the best opportunity for making the most favourable impressions upon the minds of the people. Few Sabbath evenings were therefore allowed to pass without a meeting, mostly held in school-rooms. The first time I was allowed to speak from a pulpit was in one belonging to the Established Church, at Kilmarnock. I certainly felt very grateful to the liberal-minded minister for affording me such an opportunity of laying before so large a congregation the truth upon an important subject; and I was also not a little amused when he expressed regret because he had neglected to instruct his beadle to have the pulpit gown ready for me. I thanked him, and said that the gown was to me what Saul's armour was to David—I

had never proved it, and would much rather do without it.

It was a rare thing in those days for a Temperance advocate, having no handle to his name, to get into a pulpit. Whether some people may not consider it progress in the wrong direction, or unwarranted innovation, may be doubtful; but certain it is, things are very different *now* from what they were *then*. Scarcely a Sabbath passes but opportunities present themselves of speaking from the pulpits of one or other of the various denominations of Christians—Episcopal and Roman Catholic excepted. There is nothing more distinctly indicates the favour our cause has gained in the estimation of the Christian community than the ready manner in which, compared with fifteen years ago, churches and pulpits are now thrown open to the agents of the League. It would appear that our Directors themselves have also, since that time, made progress in the right direction; because, I remember receiving notice from Mr. Rae, a short time after entering their service, that the Board did not wish more than five nights a week, and that they wished me to rest on Saturday and Sabbath. My reply was to the effect that I would prefer Saturday and Monday. It might be that the Board considered six nights speaking a week too much; but I rather imagine they had doubts about the orthodoxy of a layman speaking on Sabbath. Be that as it may, they have no such scruples now; and when a new agent is employed, he is given to understand that, if required, he will have to speak on Sabbath as on other evenings.

Despite of all drawbacks and gainsayers, we are moving in the right direction.

Previous to my first visiting the west of Scotland, the Glasgow and South-Western Railway had been constructed ; and during the time of its formation drinking and drunkenness had come in like an overwhelming flood, so that almost all the societies along its course had been made cowards of, and had wholly lost the name of action. Between Glasgow and Dumfries, in 1851, I assisted in re-organizing thirty, all of which continue less or more active in the good work. Perhaps no one of them deserves more honourable mention than that of Cumnock. Well do I remember my first visit to that place. On entering it, carrying a load of temperance literature, which some people consider heavy enough, there was standing on a door-step a laughing, blithe-faced sort of man, without coat or hat, with his shirt sleeves rolled up to his shoulders, while from neck to knee he was covered with a leathern apron. From the apparent interest with which he was watching my approach, my mind was impressed with the idea that he was an abstainer, who, notwithstanding the fiery trial consequent on railway-making, had stood firm to his principles, and I had resolved to ask him as to the whereabouts of Mr. James Smith. But before I could put the question, he cried out,—“Come along, Easton, I am glad to see you.” How do you know my name? I inquired. “Ha, man, I ken a’ you kind o’ folk,” was his reply. This was none other than the James Smith whom I wanted, and in whose house Mr. Stirling found a home, and in

whose wife he found a faithful nurse, when bitten by a villanous dog. At that time there were only a very few members of the League in Cumnock; now there are over a hundred.

My reception when I reached Thornhill, Dumfriesshire, was very different. It was with great difficulty the man could be found who had been advised of my visit; and when he was, he was sitting along with other three, discussing a bottle of whisky. When shown into the room where they were, I inquired for Mr. —. "I am the man," said one of the four. "Well, it may be so," was my reply, "but you are not the man for me;" and, without saying more, I left the house, and set about finding an abstainer. This, after no little trouble, I succeeded in doing, and a meeting was got up.

To find the man, whom of all others you expected to award you the most hearty welcome, sitting half-drunk, while sufficiently discouraging, looked at from one point, is, looked at from another, well fitted to rouse your indignation against the whole drink-system; and is by no means so powerful to unnerve the whole man, and beget a feeling of contempt, as the following: On one occasion, when visiting a town in Perthshire, I called as usual upon the man who had been requested to get up a meeting. The door was opened by a lady who sported an immense profusion of ringlets. When given to understand who and what I was, she said in the most frozen, contemptuous manner, "Oh, yes, I did hear Mr. — say something about a man coming from Glasgow." She then showed me into a

room where the veritable gentleman was sitting, perfectly sober. With the most unblushing coolness he informed me that no arrangements had been made for a meeting. Had he been drinking, or drunk, I would not have been so provoked, except that I might have been provoked to get up a meeting independent of him. The night being far advanced, and the man quite sober who should have got up a meeting, I did not feel disposed to move in the matter. Accordingly, accepting a cold invitation to take a seat, I sat down, while, with some difficulty, I kept my indignation from boiling over. By and by, another gentleman came in, when it was proposed to clear the floor, and have a game at bowls, in which I was requested to join. I could stand it no longer; but, begging to be excused, told them that I had other work to attend to, and would take it kind to be informed where lodgings might be obtained. The gentleman who should have tried to get up a meeting said he thought he knew where I might be accommodated, and if I would accompany him he would go and see. Off together we went, and it was not long before we were ushered into a room which, from the damp, mouldy smell that met us on entering, was evidently in want of ventilation. The guidwife, however, was a frank, hearty sort of a woman, and promised an excellent fire in a short time. As the first step towards that being done she at once had a sack of straw pulled out of the chimney. Being a cold, frosty night, I kept dancing up and down the damp clay floor until the fire should blaze up, which was not long, for the woman really went about her work very expeditiously.

Having been left alone, I pulled off my boots and sat down with the view of reading for an hour or two; but the clay floor was desperately cold. Looking round for a rag of any description to lay below my feet, I noticed what appeared to be a suitable thing peering out from beneath the bed-curtain. I hastily pulled it out, when, behold, a quantity of potatoes that had been stored there came dancing across the floor! "Well, well," thought I "with a book to read, a blazing fire to sit by, and plenty of potatoes to roast, many a man has fared worse." For the greater part of the night I kept up a good fire, read my book, and roasted a potato now and again; and so soon as it was break-of-day I bundled up and walked to Perth, which was not a hundred miles distant, and where, in the evening, I had the pleasure of hearing the Rev. T. C. Wilson, Dunkeld, preach a temperance sermon in the City Hall.

Nothing more provokingly careless than the above crossed my path during the first two years' service with the League, except on two occasions when the letters offering my services were not opened on my arrival. Had the parties to whom these letters were sent been like the Thornhill worthy, pledge-breakers, or half-drunk when I arrived at their respective localities, it would not have been so annoying; but they were both abstainers, and both occupying good social positions. I ventured to say to one of them that it was a pity he had not replied to Mr. Rae's letter, as his not having done so involved the League in the loss of time and money. He very coolly asked, "What

obligation am I under to answer your letters?" I thought that such a question did not deserve an answer, and left his house with a feeling of contempt, believing him to be one of the many sleepers in the firm who take cheerfully all the dividends that are going, but refuse to share in the work. I have mentioned the above merely as illustrations of what we had to try our faith and patience fifteen years ago; and things were not so bad then as they were when Mr. Stirling commenced work. Happily we know very little of such treatment now. As a rule, everything is done that can reasonably be expected of our friends, to make our visits to their respective localities pleasant and efficient.

Let me turn from such reminiscences to one of a more pleasing character. When I first visited Dumfries, under the auspices of the League, four meetings were held for the purpose of having the society re-organized. At the conclusion of the fourth meeting, in acknowledging a vote of thanks that had been awarded, I gave an edition and brief application of a hackneyed story. "There was a time," I said, "when the French and we were not on such intimate terms of friendship as now; on the contrary, we were haters of each other, and we were, in fact, living in constant terror of a French invasion. There being no telegraphic wires in those days, our forefathers made the best possible arrangements that, should they dare to set a foot upon our shores, the news might be transmitted from one end of our island to the other with all possible speed. This was done by their having

material for a bonfire placed on the summit of many of the higher hills. By and by, the alarm was given that the French were landed. Immediately the fires were made to blaze, and the dreadful news was conveyed, with all the rapidity at which light travels, to every corner of our country, and the result was, that in every town and village were to be seen the hoary-headed sire, together with young men, the bulwark of a nation's strength, running to and fro in search of the most available weapons with which to kill their country's foe. For want of something better, one might have been seen laying hold upon a rusty scythe, another upon a pitchfork, and so on. But had you searched the country over, you would not have found one losing time inquiring into the roots and derivations of words, in order to satisfy their conscience whether or not a rusty scythe was a scriptural weapon with which to kill a Frenchman. No, no! It was sufficient for them to know that the weapon was the best they could obtain in the circumstances; and with what they had, they were ready and willing to do what they could to defend their country. They were not like many of their degenerate sons, who profess such tenderness of conscience that they dare not wield the "abstinence" weapon, however efficient they know it would be in delivering us from the actual invasion of drunkenness, because, forsooth, a liquor called wine was used at the marriage feast of Cana. They were men of different mettle than that. They cared little from what quarter the enemy came, what his prestige or pedigree. Was he their country's foe? and was the weapon they had

the best they could obtain to lay him low? Satisfied on these points, they at once hurried off to their respective village greens to put themselves in battle array. On a certain green there appeared among the others an old woman of threescore and ten, who, for want of a better weapon, had brought the tongs. He who had been selected as commander-in-chief, addressing the patriotic old lady, said,—‘My good woman, what has brought you here? I am afraid you will not be able to render us much good service.’—‘Well,’ she replied, ‘it is not very much good I profess to be able to do. Indeed, sir, it is not much you can expect me to do; but,’ shouldering the tongs, she added, ‘I’ll tell you what I can do,—I’ll show them what side I’m on.’ Now, it is more than probable, I said, that some of you who have been present these four nights may have resolved in future to abstain from drink, but not to come and join the society. If there be any such, let me submit for their consideration if it be not their duty to come at once, and, like this good patriotic woman, ‘show to all what side they are on.’”

Being in Newcastle lecturing, a few years after the meetings referred to had been held, I received a letter from a lady who lived a few miles out of town, requesting me to call upon her. In company with Mr. M. Wilson, a good abstainer from Lockerbie, I responded to the invitation. When we reached the residence of the lady, we found that she was from near Castle-Douglas—Miss I—— G——, a lady with whom at that time I was quite unacquainted, but to whom *now*, after having known her for eleven years, I can refer as

being one of the most determined, uncompromising, zealous abstainers in Scotland.

After we had exchanged introductory courtesies, Miss G—— said—"Mr. Easton, I wanted to see you that I might tell you what will encourage you in your work. You remember speaking some years ago four nights in Dumfries: well, I was present at all your four meetings, and at the conclusion of the last one I had made up my mind never to taste drink again, but that I would not join the society. In acknowledging a vote of thanks, however, you may perhaps remember telling the story of the woman with the tongs, who boldly declared she would let them know what side she was on. After that I could resist no longer; I saw it was moral cowardice not to let it be known what side I was on, and I went forward while you were standing on the platform, and put down my name, and in the course of the next four months I got 160 to do the same thing." I thanked the lady for putting me in possession of such an encouraging fact, and added, that it was a very good illustration of how great a matter a little fire kindleth, having had very little idea that telling the story had been productive of such great results.

I am aware that there are many who practise abstinence who have not connected themselves with any society. So far very good; but such are not doing the best they can, either for themselves or for the cause. Had Miss G—— done nothing more than carried out her first resolution, she never would and never could have accomplished the good she has done. It is most

important that men show what side they are on; and very amusing is the ingenuity some of them display in defending themselves in the practice of trying to be on both sides. As an illustration of this, I may mention the following:—

When visiting a fishing town in the north, where neither school nor church could be obtained for a meeting, Mr. Elder, who has now passed to another and better world, secured a herring shed or loft, in which we held three meetings—one on the Friday, the second on Saturday, and the third on Sabbath evening. The meetings were all well attended; but on Sabbath night the place was so crowded that it was with difficulty I could find standing room. Not only was every available inch of the floor occupied—there were as many sitting on the joists of the house as would have made a decent meeting. The whole place was so very hot that, from prudent considerations, I put off both coat and necktie. At the conclusion of our Sabbath meeting, it was announced that those who wished to join the society might call at my lodgings on Monday, any time between 9 A.M. and 1 P.M. Ninety-nine responded to the invitation. Two years afterwards, when on a visit to the place, the inspector of poor supplied me with the following information:—"You are perhaps aware, Mr. Easton, that it is a common practice with a great many people in the north to travel very long distances to attend Communions. Well, sir, on the Thursday, just the day before you held the first of your three meetings, a publican had gone to a place twenty miles distant to attend the dispensation of the sacrament, and he did

not return until the Tuesday after you had left. But oh! man, what a lamentable story his wife had to tell him on his return,—“That she had not sold a single gill during his absence; that there had been a big daft man from Glasgow, who had had three meetings, and raised a great excitement among the folk, and had persuaded scores of them to promise to abstain from drink.” Having heard his wife’s story, he said, “Oh, never heed, never heed! It’s just the old thing again in a new form. You mind how, when Moses went up to the mount, Aaron gave the people the golden calf, but when Moses returned he soon put all to rights again.”

It was certainly rather good, as well as not a little amusing, to find the publican comparing himself to Moses on the mountain, holding communion with God, and me to Aaron, embracing the opportunity of encouraging the people to turn from worshipping Bacchus, and to fall down at the golden shrine of “Abstinence” which I had presented to them. As Moses, however, on returning from the mount, had put all things right, the publican had no doubt, now that he had returned from the mount of ordinances, things would very soon be as they had long been, and as he no doubt wished them to continue. It was not long, alas! until he had things very much his own way; and at this time the place is not known in our temperance map, although, in passing through it in 1864, I learned that there were a few who still abstained. This publican is but a type of a class who try hard to be on both sides, and who, to justify their conduct, have recourse to the

most miserable shifts, even to that of perverting the sacred oracles.

Although I have never looked upon abstinence so much in the light of a *curative* as in that of a *preventive*, it is pleasing to be able to testify that there is scarcely a society in which there is not a reformed drunkard. I had the curiosity for one month, in 1864, to try to find out, as nearly as possible, the number of reformed drunkards in the twenty-five societies visited during that time, and which, with one exception, were all in small towns and villages; and on an average there were five in each.

Were I to relate all the cases that have, of late years, come to my knowledge where I had been made the instrument of arresting those who were standing on the very verge of what the world calls drunkenness, and of reclaiming drunkards, a volume such as this would not contain them. Let a sample suffice. I begin with the latest.

In the month of May, 1865, after I had addressed a meeting in one of the many places surrounding Glasgow, a man came forward, and, after putting the following letter in my hand, walked away:—

M. P. S., 19th May, 1865.

MR. GEORGE EASTON.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to introduce myself, not as an enemy, but a friend, to thank you, inasmuch as you were the instrument, in God's hand, of making me an abstainer. Excuse me while I give a little of my experience. Being brought up

in an inn, I do not remember when I did not taste drink ; but well do I remember when, for the first time, I saw drink to be an evil thing. It is thirteen years ago, when in Portsoy, that I heard you lecture—that my eyes were opened to the evils of drink. Nothing could ever efface from my mind what you said that night, although for some time I had not the moral courage to join the society. Like many young men, I thought life could not be enjoyed without drink; and there is an enjoyment under its influence, but it is irrational, and not to be compared with that experienced by those who abstain. For my own part, I never knew what real enjoyment was until the drink was put away. I never was what is called a drunkard; but I do feel that I made a narrow escape. The Temperance cause has not only been the means of providing myself and family with temporal blessings that otherwise we could never have enjoyed, but, most important of all, it was the means of leading me to seek after and obtain the salvation of my soul. No wonder that I should feel glad at having this opportunity of once more hearing you. My firm conviction is, that the success of the cause you advocate would greatly tend, under God, to lessen human suffering, to stay the progress of pollution, crime, and Sabbath profanation, and promote the high and lofty interests of national order, sound morality, and true religion. It does appear to me that the most important link in the chain that binds morality to Christianity is *temperance*. There is much need for you here. Drunkenness is not decreasing in this place, although, I am glad to say, from one licence having been withdrawn, there is less Sabbath-drinking.

Since I came to this place, in June, 1862, I have attended nearly 500 convictions, all of which, except six, were caused, either directly or indirectly, through drink.

The public works have of late been standing idle here, owing to some misunderstanding between the masters and men, and I could furnish you with some of the most heartless, diabolical proceedings of some of the workmen,—such as receiving money from their union, and then going to the

public-house and spending their small pittance, and returning home to maltreat their wives. This is the dark side of the picture. Let me turn to the other. We have here a number of sterling temperance men, specially among the young. Let us trust God the fruit will appear more abundant some day. My children have never known the taste of drink, and I trust never will. I do not think you are despairing in the good cause; but from a conviction that you should be made acquainted with all such cases as my own, I have written for your encouragement. We are not to put our candle under a bushel; and if a tithe of those who have benefited from temperance, as I have done, were to come right out with it, a blaze of light would be produced, fitted to gather round our movement all the good and godly in our country. May God be with you! is the prayer of yours,

K. U., *Police Constable.*

In the year 1859, when addressing a large meeting in Parliament Square, Edinburgh, I referred in rather a sarcastic manner to a stupid cry which had about that time been taken up and made a great deal of by certain parties, that abstinence had proved a failure. After the meeting, and as I was on my way down the High Street, a working man came forward, and asked if I would speak with him for a minute. "Most undoubtedly," I said, "what is it you wish?"—"Well," he replied, "you were referring in your speech to that nonsensical cry of abstinence being a failure, and while you were doing so, I just thought to myself, if abstinence has failed, it can only be because of its being rejected. I can tell you, sir, it has not proved a failure in my experience. Six years ago, when I was persuaded to become an abstainer, I had not one six-

pence to rub on another, though I was not by any means a drunkard, and to-night, before coming to your meeting, I was lodging some money in the saving's bank, where I have now a good nest egg. I have six shares in an investment company; and if you go to my house just now you will find my wife busy making herself a silk gown. I tell you this, Mr. Easton, not boastingly, but for the purpose of encouraging you in your work. It would be queer logic, sir, that would convince my wife that abstinence had been a failure." We parted, and I saw nothing more of him for five years, when he informed me that he was still holding on by the good cause, and that it was still as great a blessing to him as ever.

The above are two cases out of many which might be given of men being rescued from the very borders of what is called drunkenness, and raised from poverty to comparative affluence. Let me *now* call the attention of the reader to a notable instance of men rescued *from* drunkenness—and also to a not less notable one of men *ruined* through drink.

In 1853, when Mr. John Duncan, now the Rev. John Duncan, Aberdeen, and I were labouring together for some time, we arrived at an important town in the North, containing above ten thousand inhabitants. Our marching orders were to remain there for eight or ten days, and endeavour to revive the cause, which had become very flat. We were told on our arrival that it was of no use, it would only be a waste of time and money. We replied, "Orders must be

obeyed; and we shall most assuredly stay and do the best we can. We shall pay our own hotel bill, and all other necessary expenses; and all we want of the few abstainers here is their advice and countenance." A few of the friends were brought together, with whom we consulted as to what was best to be done. It was unanimously agreed that, weather permitting, the meeting should be in the open air. A deputation was then appointed to wait upon the Provost, and request permission for us to stand at the cross and deliver temperance addresses. All honour to the Provost, although connected with the traffic, he granted the request most cordially. We went to work on the evening of the day on which we had arrived, and continued for eight nights, speaking for nearly two hours each night, and distributing thousands of tracts. If all the people in the town did not hear us, they heard of us. A great many gave in their adherence to the movement. Among those who did so were twenty of the greatest drunkards in the place. One of them, according to his own account, had not been within a church door for seven years, except on one occasion, when, in order to disturb a political meeting, he broke through the window of one, and for so doing obtained free lodgings in jail for a few days. This man at that time considered himself an advanced Liberal, and an out-and-out Reformer. In 1864, when labouring in the North, and when within a hundred miles of the place referred to, I received from one of these reformed drunkards the following letter:—

MY DEAR EASTON,

Accept the kind regards of my wife and family, along with my own; for, thank God, you have been the instrument in his hand of saving me, I believe, from a drunkard's grave, and from a drunkard's doom. When you reach this place, will you for once make my house your home during your stay, and my wife will make you as comfortable as possible.—Yours truly,

I need not say how much pleasure the reception of this letter conferred, nor how gladly the invitation it contained was accepted. On reaching the place, I went direct to his hospitable home, and found every comfort awaiting me. As we sat at the tea-table I asked him how many of the twenty drink-victims who, along with himself, had joined twelve years past, when Mr. Duncan and I were in the place, were standing firm. He replied, "Well, if you choose, I'll take you to the dwellings of seventeen out of the twenty, who are still holding fast."—"Man," I said, "that is capital, and supplies Mr. Duncan and myself with seventeen weighty reasons why we should thank God and take courage; and, if the weather keeps favourable, that fact shall be proclaimed at the cross to-night." The weather did keep favourable, and at eight o'clock I was standing upon the veritable solid platform occupied so long by Mr. Duncan and myself, more than twelve years before. Having delivered my address, I paused for a little, and then proceeded to say, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, I am going to inform you of three very important facts. *First*, Twelve

years ago last June, when Mr. Duncan and I stood here for so many nights, and delivered addresses, twenty of your drunkards took the pledge of abstinence. *Secondly*, A twelvemonth after that, your superintendent of police, in his annual report, took notice of the peaceable town you had had consequent upon that event; and, *thirdly*, and best of all, I am glad to be able to say that seventeen of those twenty have kept their pledge up till the present moment. There are many, if not all, of them here to-night. Not as they were twelve years ago, but as sober men they now stand among you. I challenge all the ministers in your town, with all their sessions, to appear here or anywhere, and prove that, with all the schemes of all their churches, they have been blessed of God in rescuing seventeen out of twenty drunkards during the last twelve years, unless when they got them to adopt our principle. It is very doubtful if, putting them all together, they could produce one such case. And why? Not because the men who constitute the leaders in your churches are less earnest, less pious, or less devoted to the cause of God than Mr. Duncan and myself. Why is it, then, that among the many good things they have been honoured in doing, that of rescuing the drunkard does not form one? Just because among all their church schemes, the necessary one for rescuing the drunkard finds no place. Ask any minister who works "abstinence" as heartily as he does other schemes for doing good, and he will have little difficulty in pointing you to more than one drunkard rescued through his instrumentality. The

Rev. Mr. Greig, of Kirkpatrick-Durham, once said in my hearing "that in eighteen months Dr. M'Culloch and Mr. Andrew Wardrobe, of Dumfries, did more by means of abstinence to arrest drunkenness in his parish than he had been able to accomplish by every other means. And on perceiving the power for good of such a scheme, like an earnest, honest, common-sense man, he at once became an abstainer, and president of the society that had been formed."

While the rescue of seventeen out of twenty drunkards is, to every person with a rightly constituted mind, a pleasing illustration of what abstinence can do, the following is equally well adapted to show what drink can do, and ought to be a warning to all :—

During the eight nights we were speaking in the town referred to, it was known that seven men, occupying at the time good social positions, bribed a brass band to appear at the cross, and try to put us down. Precisely as the clock struck eight, the band appeared at the cross one night, and commenced a noisy demonstration. Such opposition was not easy to withstand; but we were determined not to give in. So we went to work, speaking ten minutes each alternately. By and by the band beat a retreat, and left us masters of the field. For this, we afterwards learned, we were indebted to a few drunkards, who went to the chief magistrate, and also to the superintendent of police, and told them, if they did not interfere and cause the "band" to remove, others would, in a way that might not be pleasant.

Reader, what think you has become of the seven

men who hired that brass band to try and put us down, at the very time when we were being made the instruments, under God, of rescuing seventeen out of twenty drunkards? Read on and you will learn. No. 1, on returning from a public dinner drunk, fell from his conveyance upon the road, and was killed. No. 2, returning from a similar assembly drunk, fell from his conveyance over the parapet of a bridge, and was carried up a corpse. No. 3 died of *delirium tremens*. No. 4 died of the same dreadful malady. No. 5 went south to Dumfriesshire, and died from disease brought on by drink. No. 6 still exists: it cannot be said, in a proper sense, he lives. No. 7 went to a foreign land; and whether he is dead or living we cannot say. Let the reader remember that these seven men were not, twelve years ago, greater sinners in the matter of drinking than many others who at the present time treat the temperance movement with as great contempt as they did, although that contempt may be manifested in a way somewhat different. Before other twelve years pass away, many such will have reached an end similar to theirs.

What strange infatuation, that, notwithstanding the many and dreadful warnings given against tampering with the deceptive drink, men will still persist in exposing themselves to such dreadful ends! There does appear to be about the whole affair of drinking a kind of unaccountable delusion. Men stand and see their companions pass on from one stage of drinking to another, until, every other expedient employed by God

having failed to turn them from their madness, He causes, as a last resort (if I may be allowed the expression) to start up between them and eternal ruin that fearful malady, *delirium tremens*, with its ghostly goblins and slimy reptiles. Still the onlookers continue to drink, and seek to defend their practice by long quotations from the Bible. Nay, more, when that last expedient has failed to turn their companions back from self-murder—when God has stood aside and allowed the maddened men to throw their half-rotten carcases against the gates of death, bursting these open, and rushing unbidden into His presence, to be consigned to that place for which they have prepared themselves,—even then, over their mortal remains, they quaff the cursed drink, and quote the sacred name of Jesus in defence of such conduct! Is it possible to conceive of perversity more perverse? Frequently has the writer known professedly Christian men return home under the influence of drink after having laid in the grave the remains of those who had died of *delirium tremens*, or been otherwise killed by drink. And yet there is nothing that has ever been or ever can be said against drink which can possibly be so well fitted to excite a thorough hatred of it than seeing a victim in *delirium tremens*.

After having addressed a meeting one evening, I was informed that a person in an ante-room desired to speak with me. Poor fellow! it was painfully evident he was labouring under an attack of *delirium tremens*. I advised him at once to go home and get himself well sponged with cold water, and afterwards thoroughly

rubbed with a hard dry cloth, promising to call upon him on the following day, when he could walk with me five miles to the neighbouring town, and enjoy the fresh air, which would do him good. He at once left, promising to do as he had been advised.

This person had been a reformed drunkard for seven years ; but two years previous to the time I met him he had had stomach complaint, and, acting on the advice of his medical adviser, had taken bitter beer, and bitter beer it proved to be. From bitter beer he went on to take all kinds of drink, and, in the course of a short time, was the greatest drunkard in the place. Three days before my visit he had again resolved to abstain, and had joined the society, and now delirium had come upon him.

According to promise I called on the following morning, and found him all washed and dressed, and ready for the road, with the exception that he was sitting minus his coat. While ascending the stair I heard him talking very loudly, as if conversing with some person dull of hearing ; but on entering his room I found he was alone, sitting, in a state of perspiration, on a sofa.

On my asking what sort of night he had spent, he replied,—“Terrible night, sir ; I have fought with the devil the whole night, and just when you were coming up the stair he, along with other five, made a desperate attack upon me, and I do think but for your arrival, they would have killed me outright ; and there they are in that corner waiting an opportunity when they may pounce upon and devour me.” Sitting down

beside him, and putting my arm round his shoulder, I assured him that they should not now molest him. He then proceeded to give me a minute description of each of the six demons which were congregated in the corner of the room; and rest assured, reader, it was more terrific than pleasant to listen to him. When he had finished his description, I proposed that we should slip quietly out of the room and lock them in. He approved very highly of my proposal, and so, with stealthy step, we made our way out of the room, he locking the door.

Having been provided with a walking-stick we set out upon our journey. Nothing very particular occurred by the way, except that once it was with some difficulty he was got past a dead ass, which he declared was lying cross our path; and that shortly after he maintained that the whole road was covered with half-crowns; but very unfortunately I could not transfer one of them into my pocket. When we reached our destination we took up our abode in a temperance coffee-room. He expressed a sense of weariedness; and, in the absence of a sofa, I put three chairs together, and made free with some pillows that were in a neighbouring bedroom; but, alas! he had scarcely laid down his head when ten thousand little imps, dressed in green, began to play off their fantastic tricks upon the ceiling. He started up and cried—"Come of me what may, I cannot lie there!" According to orders, some good coffee was provided for us, of which we both partook. My fellow-traveller then became very calm, and as he appeared quite sane I took him to my meeting. While speak-

ing I kept a sharp look-out upon him, fearing that there might be a scene before long. When within fifteen minutes of closing my address, the object of my anxiety rose and went across to the other side of the hall, and sat down beside a man whom he took by the collar of the coat. The countenance of the one was not more expressive of terror and acute agony than that of the other was of extreme surprise. In a short time he quitted his hold of the man, and rising, walked quickly out of the hall. I thought to myself, "the sooner I conclude the better;" and just as I was doing so, a man came into the hall in a very excited state, and said,—“For God’s sake, Mr. Easton, come away! the man that came along with you is gone mad.” To allay the excitement produced by this appeal, an explanation had to be given; after giving which I went, accompanied by a few others, to the temperance coffee-room, where we found the poor man sitting without coat, vest, necktie, or hat. His left thumb was held between his clenched teeth, and from his mouth the blood was flowing profusely, while with his right hand he firmly held by the right leg of the chair upon which he was sitting. The perspiration was dropping from every hair of his head, and he was shrieking like a person suffering the most acute agony. It was an awful sight; and the parties with me, never having seen a person in a similar condition, were terror-stricken. Having got a spoon, I proceeded to have his thumb liberated, and succeeded, but not before the thumb had been bitten to the bone. Cloth was obtained, and we had the wound dressed, he still holding the leg of the chair

with his right hand. When the paroxysm had subsided a little, we asked what had been the cause of all this. He replied,—“When you were speaking, sir, there came a swarm of bees into the hall, one-half hived on your face, and the other on mine, but ultimately they all fixed upon me. My sufferings were so great that I rose and went over to a person in the hall, and took him by the collar of the coat, thinking he would assist me; but no, he just sat and stared. I then left the hall, and when I reached the door, I found a skep of bees, which I lifted in order to return them to their rightful owner. But, sir, the officers of justice pursued me, and caught me, and without further trial it has been determined that I shall be taken to the county town, and there be crucified after the manner of our Saviour. And, sir, I am innocent—innocent; and then the bees are hived in the leg of this chair, and I am trying to keep them in, but cannot. Oh, sir, I am stung all over. Oh, mercy! have mercy! oh have mercy upon me!” At this stage I sent a messenger to a doctor to inform him of the circumstances, and to request him, if possible, to send some soothing medicine. The messenger soon returned, bringing a powder which was to be given in a little jelly. Requesting the parties present to watch our patient, I went down stairs to procure what was required. On returning there was a scene presented, so ludicrous, that it was scarcely possible to keep from laughing. The insane man had caused all the others, along with himself, to sit down upon their knees, and form a figure like a barrel with their handkerchiefs, while with his right hand he

was working very hard, as if pitching something into it. "In all this world," I said, "what is that you are doing now?" In a subdued voice, he replied, "whist, whist, we are skepping the bees." "Sit up," I said, "and take this nice jelly, which will do you far more good than skepping bees." "Dip it among the honey," he said, "and I will take it." Professing to do as he had desired, I then went behind him, and putting my left hand below his chin, with the right I put the jelly into his mouth. He started up and squirted it out; and when some of it fell upon his hands, he roared out, in the most unearthly manner, that I was throwing serpents upon him with the view of killing him at once. Like a madman, he set to loosing his braces; and before we could interfere, he had off his trowsers, but not without having torn them severely. Matters were now assuming a serious aspect, and we became afraid that he might die among our hands. A messenger was at once despatched to bring a doctor. When he came he pronounced the man mad. "No doubt of that," I said, "but it is madness the result of long-continued drinking." The case was so peculiar that the doctor was rather sceptical in regard to this. However, in a short time he was quite satisfied of its correctness. Having prepared a decoction of some description, he went forward to administer it; but the madman struck at him, and sent the tumbler out of his hand with a vengeance. We had now to take strong measures, and hold him down upon a chair, while he kept crying in the most terrific manner—"Water! water! water!" but when water was given

he as often squirted it out, declaring that the doctor and I had drugged it for the purpose of taking his life. One of those present went and brought a large tin-pitcher full of water, assuring him that neither the doctor nor Easton had been near it—that he had brought it direct from the fountain, and that he might drink it with all safety. The poor fellow laid hold of the pitcher, and, putting it to his head, took such a draught as I had never seen a man take, and then placing the pitcher upon his knee, he folded his arms over it, and said—“The Lord be praised! there is some chance of justice being done me yet.” Having secured a wet cloth, and wrapped it about his head, I stood and held it on for fully an hour. After this, reason to some extent began to assume its prerogative. It was now 2 A.M.; and we had to return to the town whence we had come on the previous day. His trowsers had been sent to a tailor and brought back, and we proceeded to the work of having him clothed, though we could not say he was yet in his right mind, for the moment we attempted to put on the trousers he objected, until a bit of cord was, according to his instructions, tied round one of the pockets, “to testify against us,” as he said, “when we appeared with him in the High Court of Justiciary.” His instructions being attended to, the trowsers were got on, and then the vest and coat; but putting his hand into the breast-pocket of his coat, he cried, very tartly, “Where is my pocket-book?—some person has stolen it.” “Here is the book,” said one, handing it to him. He opened it, and examined it carefully, and then said, quite de-

liberately, that three pounds had been taken out of it, and that from the house he would not stir until it was restored. Here we had got into a fix. We were all satisfied that he had lost nothing, and we were not disposed to give him three pounds. We thought, if we could only get him away, he would soon forget about the money. Accordingly, I said, "I'll tell you what we will do. If the money you speak of be really lost, I pledge myself to see it paid when we get home." Looking me sternly in the face, he said,—“Well, you are a decent sort of man, and I will venture to trust you.” A conveyance, in the shape of a farmer's cart, having been procured, we started as soon as possible.

It was full moon, and a beautiful summer morning, as we slowly wended our way down one of Scotland's most magnificent glens. While we moved on, the poor man kept looking first to one side and then to the other, with intense earnestness and terror marked on every feature. When asked what he was looking after, he replied—“Looking after? I am keeping a watch of the devil, for he is certain to pounce upon me, should he get the chance.” Having laid himself back a little, his eye caught the moon, when he cried out, in a most terrific manner, that the devil had gone up into the air, and was about to hurl a ball of fire down upon him. It was only by being overpowered that he was kept from throwing himself from the conveyance. I am satisfied there is no precipice over which he would not have thrown himself at that moment had he had the opportunity. When we had got within half a mile of our destination we heard the town clock strike

four; and not being ambitious to enter the town in such a heavy-going chariot, I resolved to send it back, and make my companion walk the last half-mile. No sooner, however, did he begin walking than he began to throw first one hand, then the other, over his head; and when asked the reason, he replied that "Satan, baffled in his attempts to kill him, had now put ropes across the road, to prevent him getting home, and he had no alternative but leap over them, or throw them over his head." I advised him to take the easiest plan, and walk on. By and by, however, he came to a dead stand; and when asked why he was standing there, he said that the devil could not stop him with ropes, and had cut a ditch across the road for that purpose, and he was calculating whether or not he could leap it. "Do not attempt leaping," I said, "but come to this side—the devil cuts no ditches here." He at once came right across the road, and stepped on to the footpath, and we walked on arm in arm. When we reached the town, and had turned into the close that led to his house, he stopped, and asked where I was going. "I am going to see you home," was my reply. He said, "It is a very improper hour to go to any decent man's house." "Well, you can go home yourself, and I will go direct to my lodgings," I replied. "Yes," he said, getting between me and the close-mouth; "but you must pay me that three pounds first." My hopes of his forgetting about the money were blasted. I pled with him to allow me to go home with him, and if his wife said the three pounds had been lost, I would pay it. He consented. A short

time more and we were at the bedside of his wife, when he recounted to her everything that had happened from the time we left until we returned, more minutely than I have done. He told everything, however, in such a way as to criminate everybody but himself. He complained of our cruelty in throwing a swarm of bees upon him, and after that of representing him as a thief, and setting the officers of justice upon him. He asserted that we had torn his trowsers off him, and, with the assistance of a doctor, had tried to poison him by giving him drugged water to drink; that we had robbed him of three pounds, adding, "And though this man," pointing to me, "promised to give me back the money, he has not done so." The wife assured him that the three pounds he referred to were not in his pocket-book at all, but in his desk in the parlour. He ordered her to rise and find it for him; and while they were in the parlour I made my escape as quickly as possible, trusting I would never have to spend another night with any person in such a condition. In the course of a month I had a letter from him, thanking me kindly for all my trouble. The reader will be disposed to ask, "Was he reclaimed?" Alas! no.

Having been previously sceptical as to a man's being able afterwards to remember what he had said and done when in *delirium tremens*, the above experience, along with what follows, convinced me that I was in error:—Once, when in Berwick-on-Tweed, I met a person with whom in early life I was very well acquainted. Socially considered, there had always been a great gulf between us, but not so great as to

prevent our having friendly intercourse. Being in Berwick at the time, he noticed the bills announcing my meeting. He sought out my quarters, and accompanying me to the place of meeting, took his seat on the platform. For a good while he sat and listened with apparent attention. At length he rose, and on passing me to get out, he said, "Now, Easton, stop; you have said plenty." Of course, no attention was paid to his remark. When the meeting was over he was waiting at the door, and we had a walk together. During our walk he told me that the reason of his leaving the meeting was, that what was said was so very like what he had lately experienced that he could sit no longer. He also informed me that he was only recovering from a severe attack of delirium. "Only the other night," he said, "I had a severe attack, and saw the strangest scenes I have ever seen. While I was sitting in the inn there came into my room a number of strange-looking creatures, and ordered me to prepare to go along with them. I said 'No;' but they assured me that if I would not consent to go cheerfully, they would take me by force. I struggled to withstand them, but it was all to no purpose. They took me up as if I had been nothing, and carrying me away, as if on the wings of the wind, through the immensity of space, placed me down in the midst of heaven's glory. I stood and gazed with bewilderment upon a scene so transcendently glorious. It is all before my mind's eye at this moment, but no language can describe it. All that I can say is that 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath the heart of man con-

ceived' such splendour. There was music, too,—such music as you can have no conception of,—coming from ten thousand times ten thousand harps. I felt enraptured, and stood, and looked, and listened with increasing delight. While I thus stood, there came in a moment a dense dark cloud down between me and the whole scene. At the same time I heard a voice calling me by name, and ordering me to turn round. When I had done so, hell, with all its horrors and terrors, lay spread out before me. I saw the lurid flames and heard the dismal wailing of its inhabitants. But the vision cannot be described,—it is as much beyond description as the other.”—“You are right,” I said; “the power of God’s wrath can no more be known and described than the glory of that light with which he is surrounded. But, my dear friend, would it not be well that you should profit by these visions you have had. May you not in them hear God, as it were, with an audible voice, saying, ‘Here is life—there is death; here is heaven—there is hell: choose ye now which shall be your abode for ever.’”—“No doubt,” he said, “it is God, in a terrible way, brought on by my own sin, setting life and death before me.” Having expressed a hope that he would give up drinking, and turn to the Lord, who was yet waiting to be merciful, and for Christ’s sake to pardon his sins and fit him for glory, he said, “Turn! I must turn, or go to hell; but how is that to be done? I have learned to love drink; its power over me is incomprehensible; all my associates drink, and insist on me to drink,—even your old friend, Mr —, who professes to be a pious man, gives me a

glass when I call, and tells me not to take more that day. He might as well push me into the fire, and tell me not to get scorched. Oh, George!" he added, while a tear rolled down his face, "Oh, George, be thankful your father was a poor man, and that you are what you are. Perhaps it might have been better for me to-day had I been a poor man. That cursed drink has been and still is an awful curse to me. At this very time my body is so saturated with it that I cannot sleep two nights in one bed, and therefore I change my hotel every day." All I can add to this account is that he never became an abstainer; and with this the reader must be content.

It would appear, then, that visions seen when in *delirium tremens* are distinctly remembered.

What a pity people will not open their eyes to the fact that the sensations felt by the lady after taking her glass of wine require only to be increased and kept up for a time in order to bring on delirium! The sensations felt after one glass require only to be intensified to produce what is called drunkenness. They are the same in kind—they differ only in degree. Is it not strange, then, that the leaders of the people—intelligent men—should persist in calling the practice of using alcohol by the sacred name "Temperance," when science and experience combine to prove that the nature of such alcoholic drink, when used for ordinary purposes, is to lead men on from one degree of intoxication to another, and not a few into the condition of those above referred to? To be guilty of such a thing,

however unwittingly, is to be guilty of perpetuating the old plan of calling a bad practice by a good name—a plan which, of all others, has been the most successful in leading the world astray. Take one notable illustration. When Jezebel sought to seduce the Church of Thyatira, she took very good care, by calling herself a prophetess, to conceal her real character. Had she not done so she would not have succeeded so well. The devil knows well how efficient this plan has ever been and still is to gain his ends, and if Christian people can only be kept under the delusion of calling the ordinary or dietetic use of alcoholics by the sacred name “Temperance,” the adversary is certain to come in for a large share of the spoil, however hard Christians may fight against him in other ways. But for this, he knows right well he would never succeed as he has done and is doing—entering our churches and seducing so many of the servants of the Lord from the paths of virtue. So long as ministers go to the pulpit professedly to preach temperance, and only denounce what the world calls drunkenness as being a sin, and represent the ordinary use of an undefined quantity of the drunkard’s drink as “temperance,” the prince of all evil will continue to seduce thousands into drunkenness and hundreds into *delirium tremens*. A minister not long ago, when preaching upon temperance, in accordance with an order of Synod, said—“I do not say that it is wrong to take a glass of spirits at a time; on the contrary, I think that on certain occasions it may be necessary;” but he warned his hearers most solemnly against the beastly sin of drunkenness, urging upon

them the important duty of being temperate in all things—spirits and all other things of the kind, of course, included. If the devil were honest enough to speak out, he would say of such preaching, "Most satisfactory!" But let the practice of making good food into bad drink, and applying that drink to purposes for which it has no adaptation, be stigmatized as the most intemperate of all intemperate practices, the devil's power amongst us would be greatly lessened. It has long appeared to me to be the very worst tactics on the part of temperance reformers to allow drinkers to retain peaceable possession of the term "temperance" as the designation of their practice of drinking. So long as we leave them in possession of this, we have no fair chance of bringing them over to the right side; for no sooner are they hard pressed than they fall back within the entrenchment that they are temperate, and, if so, "What," they ask, "have you got to say against temperance?"

This is one of the strongholds of the drink-system, and the sooner drinkers of every shade are dislodged from it, the better for themselves and the world. But the most painful thing is that a great many abstainers assist in keeping them there. In defiance of the plainest teaching, and in defiance of much they themselves teach, they cling to the erroneous idea that "Abstinence" is not the only practice that constitutes "Temperance" as regards the beverage use of "Alcohol." In acting thus, they not only weaken their own position, but strengthen that of their opponents.

I remember attending a social meeting, or soiree,

got up by one of our societies under the patronage of a number of wealthy people, who wished to be considered temperance reformers.

The committee who undertook all the drudgery of getting up the meeting were glad, no doubt, to see present a provost, two or three councillors, two bailies, seven ministers, one retired medical man, and a great many more of the elite of the place; while a brother of the lord-lieutenant of the county in which the meeting was held occupied the chair. In the opening address of the chairman there were many excellent things, and underneath all there was evidently a great amount of Christian piety; but he repeatedly gave the audience to understand that he did not consider there was any sin in taking a glass of wine. He said he knew what temperance was, and he knew what nephalism was, but as for teetotalism, he knew nothing about it. He was a nephalist. While the chairman was going on in this style, my mind was being made up to let him know, before all was over, what temperance and teetotalism were.

Four or five ministers spoke, and every one wished it to be understood that they cordially agreed with the chairman in thinking there was no sin in taking a glass of wine; and, of course, the man who could not get wine would conclude that there was as little sin in taking a glass of whisky. One of the committee, who, no doubt, desired peace, noticed that a good deal that was being said was by no means satisfactory to me, and handed me a card requesting me not to say aught that might disturb the harmony of the

meeting. He was given to understand that the truth, as I understood it, would be told, impugn it who might.

On being introduced to the meeting, I expressed my thankfulness in having such a chairman; it was not often temperance agents were introduced to a meeting by one holding his social position. There were two things I had learned from his speech, and while referring to these, I trusted he would bear with me in exercising the liberty he had claimed for himself, of speaking out honestly what I thought.

"In the first place," I continued, "judging from your address, sir, I am satisfied your heart is right; but, secondly, I am equally satisfied that you are far from being what is considered orthodox by many on the temperance question. Now, sir, much of that confusion of teaching that obtains among good men in reference to the object in behalf of which we are this night met arises from the want of a definite understanding of what constitutes 'temperance' in regard to the use of alcoholic drink. You have said that you know what temperance is, but that you are ignorant of teetotalism. Allow me to say, sir, that so far as drink is concerned, they are, in my estimation, synonymous; and, with your liberty, before proceeding with my address, I will define what constitutes true temperance in reference to intoxicating or poisonous drink. Not being an educated man, and giving my definition surrounded by gentlemen who have received a classical education, I will take it kind to be corrected by any of them, if wrong. Let it be remembered we are speaking in a restricted sense—as it regards dietetics. Temperance, like all the other virtues, has a positive and a negative side—or, in other words, like all the commandments in the Decalogue, it has its required and forbidden. What, then, does temperance in eating and drinking require? Temperance in eating and drinking requires that we

eat and drink such things as have a lawful relation to the healthy organism, and that we eat and drink of them up to that point at which the instincts of nature, assisted and governed by reason, intimate to us that for the time being we have had sufficient for our real good. When we have reached that point, we ought, however hard pressed to take more, to say, with all politeness, but at the same time with all firmness, 'No, thank you, not any more at present.' What does temperance in eating and drinking forbid? Temperance in eating and drinking forbids the eating and drinking of anything between which and the healthy organism there exists no lawful relation. Such things for instance as opium, arsenic, and alcohol. Whenever pressed to take these, except as medicines, we ought to say courteously, but emphatically, 'No, thank you, I am in good health, and don't require physic.'"

Turning to the retired medical gentleman, I said "Doctor, is that correct?" He bowed assent. "Thank you sir," I replied, "you give that bow of assent not to me, but to the utterances of science from her throne, and behind that," again addressing the Chairman, "I take my stand, and fearlessly proclaim that 'temperance,' as regards alcohol, in all its forms and combinations, as an article of diet, or beverage, is 'abstinence,' and abstinence is what has been vulgarly called 'teetotalism.' What, then, about taking a glass of alcoholic drink not being a sin? We have been told repeatedly that there is no sin in taking a glass of wine. That I readily admit if it be the wine which is spoken of in the Bible as a blessing, and which is ever associated with corn; but I apprehend the wine referred to is that in common use, and if so, then, if there is no sin in taking a glass of such a mixture, another man has as good a right to say that there is no sin in taking a glass of whisky. To say the very least of it, sir, such teaching is very uncalled for. Instead of doing anything to advance the cause in behalf of which we are here, it is much more likely to assist a *hard* tumbler going down sweetly. Had we all tried to prove that it was sinful, it is more than likely there are some present who would have had their glass notwithstanding. But if there be no sin

in taking a glass, and, of course, no sin in taking one as often as each person thinks proper (for if Mr. A. does no sin in taking a glass a day, you cannot say that Mr. B. sins in taking two), why are we here to-night at all for the very purpose of persuading all and sundry to abstain from that in the taking of which there is no sin?

“Perhaps I may be told that drunkenness abounds, and that for the sake of the drunkard we plead for abstinence from drink upon the same ground that Paul enjoined abstinence from flesh that had been offered in sacrifice to idols. Well, there can be no objection to that ground. It is a good broad one, and firm, and I would be very loath to give it up. When, however, we are about to take our stand upon this argument we should say, ‘Let us suppose, for argument’s sake, that alcohol has as lawful a relation to the healthy organism as the flesh had from which Paul enjoined abstinence;’ and then proceed as best we can, standing upon the ground of Christian expediency, to present our arguments; for if we can prove abstinence to be expedient, then it is a duty—because Christian expediency and duty are never on opposite sides. At the same time, we must not lose sight of the fact that the evils which caused Paul to enjoin abstinence from flesh did not arise out of the eating of it, but out of the peculiar circumstances in which he and others were placed. Whereas in regard to the evils that we have to lament over, they rise out of the use of the thing we urge abstinence from. In our day and country eating flesh hurts neither the stomach nor conscience of any one. Alcoholic drink has done both in all ages, and ever will do. Its beverage use is a physical wrong, and those who choose may try to prove that what is physically wrong can be morally right. But, sir, this is a subject that cannot be satisfactorily dealt with in a few minutes. Having, however, indicated my ideas very briefly and imperfectly on the point, I go on to address myself to three classes in society, who in regard to the truth as it is embodied in the Temperance movement act towards it very much as the Jews, with Pilate and the soldiers, acted towards Him who was the truth. Let us

see. The Jews, in all that they did, acted from conviction that they were right. Jesus had said that he was the Son of God. This, in the estimation of the Jews, was blasphemy, and they had a law that every one guilty of that sin was to be put to death. At the time, however, to which we refer, they had no power as a nation to put any man to death. The sceptre had departed from Judah and a lawgiver from between his feet; but they pled hard with the Roman governor that power might be granted them to do what, from conviction, they believed should be done. Not only did they act from conviction, they also acted in ignorance of the evil they were doing,—‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ But while all this is true, we must not forget that their ignorance was their sin. They might have known better. Their own prophets had foretold, in the plainest terms, the time and manner of the coming of their Great Deliverer, as well as the purpose for which he was to come. Yet, strange to say, when he did come, at the very time and manner predicted, he was so different from all their preconceived notions in reference to their expected Deliverer, that instead of accepting, they rejected him, and that from conviction that he was not the promised Messiah, and their descendants to this day continue to reject him for the same reason. Is not this the way that a great many have treated and are treating the truth as it is embodied in the Temperance movement? What are the facts of the case? Our country had long been groaning under the curse of drunkenness. Good men everywhere were getting alarmed and disgusted with its enormity and extent. Various methods were tried to arrest its progress. Drunkards were punished in a variety of ways; while the sin of which they were guilty was anathematized with great solemnity from every pulpit. God’s remembrancers kept crying night and day as it were, ‘Lord, how long! how long shall our country groan under this dire curse?’ Still no deliverance came. On, and still on the dire curse rolled like a river of burning lava. Men’s hearts began to fail, and the hope of rescuing the drunkard or our country from drunkenness had all but departed, when the truth as con-

tained in the Temperance reformation, like an angel of light, came to the rescue, and whispered in the national ear, '*Let the drink alone!*' Thousands accepted the advice, and the result was not more novel than glorious. Hundreds of drunkards accepted it, and were thereby restored to comparative comfort. A few ministers and missionaries accepted it, and very soon found it to be an excellent handmaid to the Gospel. The political economist examined it, and found it in harmony with all the principles of sound political economy. Many a housewife, with her family, accepted it, and found it equally in harmony with domestic economy. Physiologists examined and accepted it, and proved beyond dispute that it is in harmony with every organic law of life. But in the midst of all this there were not wanting men, and they are not wanting yet, who not only stood aloof from accepting it, but opposed it to the utmost of their power, from conviction that it was not the proper means by which our country was to be delivered from the galling yoke of drunkenness. Doubtless, these men, like many, had been crying that deliverance might be granted; but when their cry was answered, and this simple, but efficient means of deliverance was offered them, it was so very much opposed to all their tastes, and habits, and preconceived notions, that instead of accepting, they rejected it, as an unmitigated error. One of them told me that, after examining the Temperance movement, he had come to the conclusion that the whole affair was a device of Antichrist; and another, that he looked upon every society that I, or any other man organized, based on such principles, as a standing reflection on the conduct of Jesus. Were such men honest in holding these convictions? We believe them to have been as honest as the Jews were in holding theirs; but we believe them to have been, like the Jews, ignorant of what they were opposing, and we also hold them to be, like the Jews, verily guilty because of such ignorance. There are not a few who oppose the Temperance movement who are entirely ignorant of the whole question—who never give it five minutes prayerful consideration. The time was when ignorance on such a question was excusable. These were days of

darkness, in reference to which it may be said God winked at them; but that time has passed away, and abundant opportunities are now enjoyed, whereby at very little trouble or expense any one may become acquainted with the whole question; and it is very difficult to conceive how any good man can be in possession of the information afforded, and know of even one tithe of the good which God has been pleased to accomplish through the instrumentality of abstinence, and yet conclude that it is a device of Antichrist, or a standing reflection on the conduct of Jesus. On the contrary, we believe that instead of opposing it from conviction that it is an error, such an one would, from a deep conviction of duty, throw his whole influence into the movement, there to work and pray, and pray and work, that our country might be freed from a yoke more degrading and cruel than that under which the Jews groaned when their Great Deliverer came.

“Let us now turn to another class, one much more numerous than that to which we have been referring, and who act towards the Temperance movement very much after the manner Pilate did towards Jesus. While the Jews, in all they did, acted from conviction, it was very different with Pilate. In all he did he acted in direct opposition to his convictions. Repeatedly he asserted his belief in the innocence of Jesus, saying, ‘I find no fault in him;’ and yet he handed him over for crucifixion. Alas! how many are there still who reject the Saviour in the same manner! How many trample their convictions in the dust; and how many more drown them in the intoxicating cup! But is it not evident that there are thousands even of good people who reject the Temperance movement in the very same manner? How many are there who, if you enter into friendly conversation with them, and ask them in all kindness what they think of the Temperance movement, will reply,—‘Think of it! we would be the last in the world to say one word against it. We have no fault to find with it. It has done great good, and is fitted to do good.’ And as a proof of the good it has done, they

will proceed to tell you of a man who lives over the way, who twelve years ago was a poor drunken wretch, but who then became an abstainer, and has ever since been an exemplary church-going man, providing for his family things honest in the sight of all men. And if you further ask them what they think of the drink-system as a whole, they will at once tell you, in all honesty, they never saw any good come out of it; but, on the contrary, murder and bloodshed, and tearing asunder the tenderest ties of nature.

“Thus, if they have not two men before them, as the Jews had, with power to accept of either, they have two systems. With the one, they have no fault to find, while as regards the other, they never saw any real good come out of it. Yet, strange to say, like Pilate, they go in direct opposition to their own convictions, leave the very thing with which they can find no fault to be trampled in the dust, and forthwith take under their special patronage the red-handed Barabbas of a system that is murdering men and women every week that passes. The truth is, they will do nothing more for this good cause than Pilate did for the Author of all good. They will say, in so many words, that they *‘have no fault to find with it;’* and then at any particular season, when *‘temperance reels’* and drunkenness prevails, they will quite coolly come forward and, like Pilate, wash their hands, and wish us to believe that they are in no way responsible for it. They may just as well try to prove that because Pilate expressed his belief in the innocency of Jesus, he was not responsible in any way for his death, as try to prove that he who patronizes the drink-system is not, less or more, responsible for its dreadful out-workings.

“Had Pilate acted as he ought to have done, he would not only have said, *‘I find no fault in him,’* but have sternly refused to give him up to the malice of his enemies. Had he done so, it would have been written upon the pillar of inspiration, to his everlasting honour, that, among the many faithless, he, at least, was faithful to his convictions. This, however, was not what he did. He handed over the Innocent

One, and in doing so, not only acted against his convictions, but became guilty of shedding innocent blood.*

“What can be the reason that so many who admit our cause to be good, and the drink-system to be bad, act so much in opposition to their convictions? There is a combination of reasons; but among the principal is the one which had such a powerful influence over Pilate, and ultimately led him to crucify Jesus and release Barabbas. When he was told that Jesus made himself the Son of God, a feeling of fear came upon him, and he was in the act of retiring into the judgment-hall, no doubt for the purpose of devising, if possible, some expedient for setting at liberty one whom he believed to be an innocent man, when the Jews, afraid of being foiled, cried out, ‘If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar’s friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.’ To lose caste with Cæsar was more than Pilate was prepared for; and rather than run the risk of that, he trampled upon his convictions, and delivered Jesus over to be crucified. Is it not a fact that there are thousands of professed Christians who are thoroughly convinced that God has used the Temperance cause as a means of arresting many a wayward sinner, as he was posting on to hell, knee-deep amidst the burning ashes and parched atmosphere of the dark howling wilderness of a drunken debauchery, and of bringing him back and placing him by the still waters and green pastures of His own grace, who, nevertheless, refuse to be identified with that cause, lest they lose caste with the folly and fashion of the world? The Cæsars have not yet in great numbers believed on it, and therefore, though now and again, in the hearing of the masses, they may say a word in its favour, they still give their practical support to the drink-system. Against their convictions, like Pilate, they give vitality to the bad, and death to the good system, and, in doing so, act unjustly towards themselves, unjustly to the Temperance movement, and unjustly to the drink-system.

* See Appendix B.

“Without illustrating these three points, I will pass on to notice a third class in society who treat the Temperance cause very much as the soldiers treated the Saviour. While the Jews, in what they did, acted from conviction, and Pilate against his conviction, the soldiers acted without any conviction in the matter. There they stood like so many automata. It wholly depended upon what cord Pilate pulled what they would do. Had he ordered them to crucify Barabbas they would have done that as readily as they did the other. They just acted as they were bidden. Hence they are excellent representatives of a large class in society who have no particular convictions as to whether abstinence be right or drinking wrong. Representatives of this class will spend the evening with an abstaining family, and feel quite at home, and the next with one where the bottle circulates freely, and feel not at all annoyed. If a temperance meeting is being held, they will attend it as readily as any other, and, should they meet the speaker on the following day, they will praise him for what he said, and profess with what pleasure they heard him. They admit that all he said was right; but they see as little wrong in taking a glass, and they take it the first opportunity. If a more than ordinary temperance orator visit a place, you will see the fashionable of this class not only at the meeting, but one or more of them on the platform. There they sit and listen with apparent delight, as one burst of eloquence succeeds another, and you need not be surprised (the thing has often been done) if, at the close, one of them should rise and congratulate the audience upon the magnificent speech to which they have listened, adding that they trust it will not be lost upon them, more especially that working-men present will be greatly benefited, and so on. In short, to hear them speak as I have done, you might well conclude that in all time coming they would be in the very front of the movement, and that cobblers, quarrymen, and such like, who have had all along to fight its hardest battles, would be set aside as having no longer anything to do. Alas, alas! in the course of ten days you will find the same parties attending an agricultural dinner, and joining with the

others in drinking the nineteenth toast, 'Success to the short-horns,' to be followed by the twentieth, 'Success to the Church.' This class reminds one very much of a bit of cork thrown upon the ocean. It depends altogether upon what way the wind blows or in what direction the tide is running, to what particular point the cork will float. If the world's reformation depended upon this class, its prospects would be very dark indeed!"

Having urged the first class to reconsider the whole question, and the second to be faithful to their convictions, and having referred to the loud and pressing calls there were upon the third class no longer to be like dumb cattle in the strife, I sat down.

When the meeting was concluded most of the gentlemen on the platform shook hands with me. The Chairman was an exception, and from that I inferred that he was not cured of his erroneous notions. Time has shown that my inference was correct. Since the meeting, he has published a pamphlet, in which the views then expressed are embodied and defended. Still I do not despair of his ultimately seeing his error. He is not one whit more unsound on the Temperance question than that noble man, the late Professor Miller, was when he first became an abstainer. The first time I heard the Professor he was as heterodox on the question as any man I had ever heard speak. So heterodox was he, that a few of the old friends of the cause rose and left the place of meeting; but I said, "No, do not leave. That man is honest, or I am far mistaken. Give him a little time and he will grow;" and grow rapidly he did into one of the soundest teachers of temperance in the country. Judging from the speech

of the chairman referred to, I think he is an honest, good man, and therefore am disposed to say of him too, "Give him a little time; he will grow." There is much more to be hoped for from an honest man groping his way, than from those who have been abstainers, but have relapsed. I remember when Mr. M'Donald and I were working in company, that one night after we had delivered our addresses, and Mr. M'Donald had sung several temperance melodies, the chairman rose and proposed that a vote of thanks be awarded us. The Rev. Mr. A——, who had some years before joined the Society, but had withdrawn and gone back to the drink (it is perfectly annoying to think of the number of ministers who have done the same thing), rose and said—"Ladies and gentlemen, it is with great pleasure I rise to second the resolution your chairman has proposed. It may perhaps be thought by some that, not being an abstainer, it is inconsistent in me to do so; but I do not think it is. When a few of the disciples of our Lord informed Him that, having seen men casting out devils in his name, they had forbidden them, He said, 'Forbid them not; for whosoever is not against us is with us.' Now, it must be distinctly understood that I am not against these men. On the contrary, I will rejoice if Mr. Easton by his eloquence, and Mr. M'Donald by the charms of music, can, in any one instance, cast out the demon drunkenness, and in my own way I will try and do the same thing. I admire these men who wear the chain of abstinence round their neck; it is what every man should do who cannot otherwise keep the demon

drunkenness out. Paul on one occasion was in bonds, but he was never more noble than then. Messrs. Easton and M'Donald are noble in their chains, and it is therefore with great pleasure, sir, that I second the motion you have proposed." This is far worse than unsound teaching by an honest man only beginning to feel his way on the question. Viewed from any standpoint, it contained not only as much nonsense as it was possible to compress within the same space, but also a treacherous, although indirect, thrust at the Temperance movement.

In acknowledging the vote of thanks I spoke to the following effect:—

"Mr. Chairman, the Rev. Mr. A. justifies his seconding the resolution that the meeting has so cordially responded to, upon the ground that our Lord, on one occasion, told his bigoted disciples not to forbid others casting out devils in His name, although they were not, like themselves, his immediate attendants, or in the inner circle of discipleship. Now, it is worthy of notice that they were casting out devils by the same means as were the disciples. It was only in the name of Jesus that any party could cast a devil out; and had it not been that the disciples had a dash of ignorant self-conceit about them, far from complaining, they would have rejoiced in the good accomplished, and the honour thus conferred upon their Master's name. It would be matter of surprise if our friend did not rejoice in the success of such men as Mr. M'Donald and myself. He says, however, that he has a plan of his own by which to cast out the demon drunkenness. It would be satisfactory to know what that plan is, and whether, in even one instance, he has been successful. If so, we would rejoice with him. But, sir, are there two ways of accomplishing this work? We are disposed to believe that the disciples and others might as well have tried to cast out devils in the name of Beelzebub,

as for us to expect to cast out the demon drunkenness except by abstinence. Our success in casting out the demon drunkenness has been great: so, therefore, must be the joy of our friend; but that joy would be greatly increased if he would only share in those labours which are producing such grand results. Indeed, I have no doubt but, upon mature consideration, he will do so; because he has said that all who cannot otherwise keep out the demon drunkenness should wear the chain of abstinence. Thus he admits that abstinence is the only safety for the drunkard; and it cannot be doubted that the strong are to bear the burden of the weak. How otherwise can we bear the poor drunkard's burden, whom drink has made weak in every respect, than by setting him an example he can safely imitate? But what about abstinence being a chain? The Rev. Mr. A. has drawn an analogy between Paul in bonds and us wearing the chain of abstinence. But is there any analogy here? Paul's bonds were involuntary; he was bound by wicked men, because of his devotedness to what was right. If abstinence be a chain or bond, we have put it on, and wear it of our own free will—not only because we think it right so to do, but that we may occupy a position for doing more good to others. Paul earnestly desired that all men should be even as he was, his 'bonds' excepted. We specially include the 'bond' of abstinence, and wish that all men were as we are in that respect. Perhaps there is one point in Paul's case that bears some resemblance to ours. He was put in bonds because he went in direct opposition to prevailing opinions and practices; and yet he was a nobler and freer man than those who bound him. We are said to be in chains because we have freely bound ourselves sternly to oppose a fashionable, pernicious habit; but we maintain that we enjoy a freedom that those do not possess who represent us as wearing a chain. It is a great bondage to be unable or unwilling to shake one's self free from the tyrannous bad customs of society. We believe that liberty consists in doing right, and that all else beside is slavery. But men sometimes have strange notions of liberty. A Legree would

have thought his liberty very much curtailed had he not been allowed to whip his slaves. When Paul, in bonds, preached before Felix, he made him tremble; but, notwithstanding the eloquence of Paul, Felix was not to be deprived of what he considered his liberty, and therefore he very politely told him that he might go away for this time, and he would call for him at a more convenient season. Just so with a great many in the present day. They come and hear all we abstainers have got to say, and although we carry their judgment, conscience, and feelings along with us, they do nothing more than politely thank us, assuring us we are noble in our chains, and worthy of all respect, and then walk off quite complacently, rejoicing in what they are pleased to style liberty, giving us no reason even to hope that we will be called for at a more convenient season.

“And what after all is the boasted liberty of which they speak, and in which they rejoice?

“The very first law of nature is self-preservation; and Revelation teaches,—‘Do thyself no harm.’ But what of that? Hecate-headed *custom* dictates that the unnecessary use of a dangerous, pernicious drug be continued. Our friends bow to that dictation, and call it liberty. The first law of grace is self-denial; and Paul teaches that it is good neither to eat flesh nor drink wine, nor anything whereby a brother stumbleth, is offended, or is made weak. Men in thousands *are* being made weak, and *are* stumbling and falling through drink into the jaws of death and destruction. Every person admits that this is the case. But custom, speaking with authority, says, ‘That may be all true; but my commands are, that in order to their escape—after copious lamentations have been made for them—you visit them with pains and penalties, shave their heads, or fine them five shillings, with the alternative of so many hours in prison; or, if you choose, you may try to mitigate the evil by going heart and soul into sanitary reform, or any other reform you like; but with all due deference to Paul, you must upon no account, neither for their sake nor for that of any other party, give up using that drink which is the

acknowledged cause of their misery.' Paul is praised, but *custom* is obeyed, and this is called liberty. God has said by his servant, 'Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which there is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, to you it *shall be for meat*,' and for that purpose 'Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.' But, in opposition to this plain teaching, *custom* demands that much of that good fruit be converted into bad drink. Men obey the latter, and style obedience the exercise of liberty.

" 'The Sabbath was made for man,' and, as a general rule, it is considered unjust for one man unnecessarily to deprive another of his Sabbath's rest. 'Very true,' saith *custom*; 'but it has long been a law of mine that drink shall be used, pernicious in its nature, to produce which men *must* work on Sabbath. I have no sympathy with parties who encourage cab-driving and running trains on Sabbath; and most heartily do I sanction every effort to oppose such bad practices. By all means give the cab and engine-driver their Sabbath rest; but mark this—*keep the maltster at his Sabbath work!*' Men lift their hats and bow assent to the arbitrary dictator, and go and do his dirty work, and then turn round and point to those who refuse to obey, as wearing a chain. Sir, I wonder who have the best right to be called free men? Which side is the chain on? Is it with the men who stand up, in obedience to higher laws than those of mere custom, in direct opposition to bad practices? or is it not rather with those who bow at the shrine of folly and fashion, in opposition to these higher laws? Whatever verdict you return, mine is, that to call abstinence a *chain*, and conformity to drinking customs 'liberty,' is to call white black, and black white. Let no man reject abstinence because another may represent it as a chain: the Master himself was represented as having a devil. Neither let any man *drink* because another represents that as liberty. Just think it possible, when you hear that done, that after all it may be nothing more than calling a bad practice by a good name. Men have often perpetrated the greatest villanies under the

sacred name of liberty. And then let it be remembered that no positive good can be obtained from the ordinary use of alcoholic drink. On the contrary, science teaches, and experience echoes the truth, that in proportion to the quantity drunk, so is the injury done. It is very true, a man may use such drink and never become its slave; but let him remember he is in bondage to a practice absolutely necessary to be perpetuated, if drunkards are to be produced. The question he ought to propose to himself is,—‘How many by my example may get upon the inclined plane, down which, by an easy process, they will slide into drunkenness?’

“A man may all his life engage in teaching the young around him how, without detection, they may pick pockets, and never become a thief himself. Nay, more, it does not necessarily follow that his pupils must turn out dishonest; but being so taught, it is more than probable that many of them shall. At all events, such teaching is not more necessary to produce an expert thief, than teaching to drink is needed to produce a drunkard. Very true, men do not teach drinking with the view of making drunkards, as some actually do pocket-picking to make expert thieves; and therefore the moral culpability of the two classes of teachers is very different. The parent, for instance, who, through ignorance or mistaken kindness, teaches his child to drink, is not to be compared with the hardened wretch who teaches the child to steal, for the purpose of supplying himself with drink. But let it be remembered that the different motives of the two parents may be equally mischievous. For instance, a glass of spirits given now and again in mistaken kindness, and with the purest motives, produces the same effect, other things being equal, as when given from the basest. And just so with teaching the art of expert pocket-picking. You can easily imagine *one* man, through sheer folly, or for amusement, teaching how that may be done, and yet not have the most distant idea or desire that those whom he teaches should become dishonest, and another doing the same thing for the very purpose of turning out an expert thief; but the result in both cases to the taught may

be identical. Be assured of this, that from whatever motive men may teach the art of pocket-picking, the country is not more certain to be cursed with thieves so long as there is such teaching, than it is to be cursed with drunkards, so long as respectable people, from whatever motive, teach the practice of drinking. And then let it be remembered that there is no more good to be secured from teaching the one than the other.

“It has been argued that man’s present condition being probationary, his moral character is strengthened by being allowed to come in contact with temptation. Hence *abstinence* is objected to. It is considered that the man who goes through the world with bottles and barrels on every side, and enjoys the Christian liberty (?) of tasting now and again from both, is more likely to have his moral nature tried and fortified than he who refuses to expose himself to such temptation. If this argument be good in reference to drinking, it must be equally so in reference to being taught the art of pocket-picking. It might be argued with equal plausibility that those who are never taught that art have not the same favourable opportunity afforded of having their moral nature tested and strengthened as those who have received such education. If these things be so, then, by all means, let our youth take lessons in the art of pocket-picking and drinking too; but of course, as usual, tell them to be honest and sober, and let teachers and taught sing together—

‘ We can drink, and not be drunk,
We can fight, and not be slain;
We can learn the art to steal,
Yet remain quite honest men.’

“As for Mr. M’Donald and myself, we are simple enough to believe that if temptations strengthen or fortify our moral nature at all, it can only be when they are met with in the path of duty, and there grappled with and overcome, and not when we expose ourselves to them without a cause. Hence we advocate *abstinence* from taking or giving lessons either in

drinking or in the art of pocket-picking, being convinced that such a plan is in harmony alike with reason and with revelation, and more likely to keep us sober and honest than the other.

"It is written, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;' and if we are to be represented as wearing a chain because we refuse to run uncalled into temptation, we accept the taunt as a bond needful, like Paul's, to be borne for the sake of doing right. In the meantime, we heartily thank you for responding so cordially to the resolution moved by your chairman, and seconded by the Rev. Mr. A., and trust, when we next meet with you, we will find you all rejoicing, as we do, in the bonds of abstinence."

There can be little doubt that in passing through the world we will find temptations enough to test us, and, if resisted, to strengthen our moral nature, without running into any, when duty does not call—at least, I know that there are plenty to try the faith and perseverance of a temperance advocate, without his seeking for them. On one occasion when Mr. M'Donald and I were fulfilling our duties, we were surrounded with a combination of circumstances that constituted a very strong temptation to turn us aside from the right path; but we grappled with it and put it aside, and there was one at least benefited by the conflict. We had occasion to visit a certain town, and on entering, we noticed from bills that the meeting was to be held in the open air at eight o'clock. From family affliction, the Secretary could not be seen, and as we did not intend remaining over night, we resolved to have a pleasure walk, thinking that without fail we should meet the committee at the time and place.

announced in the bills. Eight o'clock found us at the place of meeting, where we stood for twenty minutes without a committee-man, or any other kind of man, coming near us. I felt most indignant, and proposed to Mr. M'Donald at once to leave the place; but he had had more difficulties of the same nature to contend with than, up to that time, I had ever had, and he was not to be turned aside. Accordingly he went and borrowed a chair, and proceeded with all becoming decorum to sing the 26th Paraphrase. When he began, the little children left their play, and came forward, and with apparent surprise looked up in his face, as much as to say, "And what sort of a customer are ye?" But on he went, giving out the line, and singing with as great grace as if he had been leading the largest congregation in Glasgow. By and by, some housewives, who were paying a visit to a pump close by, set down their pitchers, and, folding their arms, stood and gazed; and still he kept singing with all his might. At last one man came, and then another, and so on, until, by the time he had got to the end of the hymn, a few of the committee were visible in the outer circle of the congregation. Mr. M'Donald then addressed the meeting, and concluded by inviting them all to the hall where his friend Mr. Easton would deliver an address. To the hall we adjourned, and had a very fine meeting. I felt rebuked, and satisfied with the result; and it has often since imparted strength to me. Ever after I felt a greater firmness of purpose when going to address an open-air meeting. No doubt, as has been already said, we are the better now and

again of a little testing; but never let us court it out of the path of duty.

The late lamented Professor Miller says, that when our body becomes so affected by any disease as to require in its cure the administration of a definite remedy, the power of bearing that remedy is at the same time imparted. This he calls the law of toleration. In like manner, if trouble and trials come upon a man in the path of duty, the power of bearing them is at the same time imparted—"As thy day is, so shall thy strength be." The principle of compensation is a precious one. Often, after being placed in discouraging circumstances, and therefore much cast down, has the knowledge of good having been done by our movement been very unexpectedly communicated, and has more than compensated for all annoyances.

One morning (to give an illustration) when Mr. M'Donald and I were packing up our travelling traps to proceed to our next station—a distance of eight miles—we received notice not to leave for a little, as a gentleman who had come in from the country wished to communicate to us some very pleasing intelligence. We resolved to wait the arrival of our friend. Our patience was not long put to the test, for he arrived sooner than we expected. We received him with as hearty a welcome as only wanderers who are in the daily habit of meeting strangers can give. He was in a happy mood. His whole manner was indicative of great energy, zeal, and generosity; and to all appearance he was one of those free out-spoken sort of men that go right at what they have got to say,

without troubling themselves about the manner of saying it; and so soon as he had taken a seat, he went right to work, and poured forth, in a perfect torrent of words, a brief history of himself, which I took a note of at the time, and from which I give the following extract:—

“Now, gentlemen,” he said, “we have not long to talk; for no doubt you will be desirous to be at your journey’s end before the heat of the day. But you will be no worse of knowing a bit of my history; and I am sure, if ever you visit my native county, you are not only at liberty to refer to it, but to give my name right out. There are plenty in Haddington that know me well.

“You must understand, then, gentlemen, that thirty years ago I was a great reformer—a great man for civil and religious liberty; and when the agitation for the Reform Bill was going on, oh how lustily I did cry for ‘the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill!’ Ah, friends, it was terrible. I never can forget that time. We all drank, and were all set upon political reform. I remember well how one day there was a great gathering in the town, and the public-houses were open, and the people who had come together to gain political liberty were all drinking, and many of them drunk. I was not one whit better than any of them, and I remember very well standing on the roof of a stage coach and haranguing the crowd on the glories of liberty. And what do you think, gentlemen? When I got home that night I gave my wife a clap on the shoulder, and told her to cheer up, assuring her that if we obtained what we were fighting for, she should yet wear a silk gown. Little did I think that I was forging links at that time that were ultimately to form a chain that should bind me in awful slavery. How could I think so, when all the while I was crying at the highest pitch of my voice, ‘We shall, we shall be free!’ And then, gentlemen, when the Non-intrusion Controversy became the order of the day, I

was still for liberty—liberty of conscience, you know. Many a hard battle did I fight over the gill-stoup, for liberty of conscience and the Crown Rights of the King of Zion. But, notwithstanding all the battles I fought for all kinds of reform, and that we obtained the Reform Bill, the silk gown I promised my wife was never forthcoming. The truth is, I fought for reform, gentlemen, until my coat was threadbare, and out at the elbows; and instead of being able to purchase a new one, I could scarcely afford as much from the public-house as would keep the bairns in porridge. While contending for freedom, I became a slave. Yes; so far was I sunk by means of drink, that on one occasion, in a fit of delirium, I heard the groans of the wicked in hell, and felt its flames gathering around me. My thoughts were that I was standing on the very brink of the bottomless pit, and felt myself just about to tumble in, when some unseen hand caught hold of me, and pulled me away to a place of safety. A short time after this I began to think seriously of my position, and I very soon perceived that crying for freedom and being personally free were two very different things. The real Reform Bill I needed—personal reform—had been quite overlooked. At length it was presented to my notice in the shape of Temperance Reform. I examined its clauses, and concluded it was the Bill for me, and I went heart and soul into it, and it has been to me better than all the Reform Bills that ever have or ever will become law. For many years now I have been an abstainer, and long ago my wife got the promised silk gown, and a gold watch into the bargain; and what is better than all that, gentlemen, our younger children are receiving a good education; and that is what our older ones were deprived of when I was spending my money in the public-house, and hurrahing for parliamentary reform. And, best of all, there is peace at home now, and peace in here” (laying his hand upon his heart). “When drinking was put an end to, thinking began; and then it was that I began to realize the awful fact that I was a lost sinner. Friends, I was led to seek for and find the pearl of great price; and I am now as

happy as fallen man may be in this world: and instead of bothering my head, as once I did, about political reform, I am every day preaching temperance reform: it is my delight as well as my duty. I never can do too much for the Temperance reformation. It has been a great blessing to me; and there are few greater pleasures I have than to meet with its friends. Not long ago there was a conference of temperance men held in the village of K——e, in order to take steps to set forth its claims more prominently. I pled hard with our society to send a delegate; but the funds were low, so I just said that if they would authorize me to represent them, I would attend, and pay all expenses; and they were right glad to accept the offer, and I attended the conference, and took my wife and one of our daughters along with me. Being a delegate, you know, I was on the platform along with some of your big folk from Glasgow, and made a speech, too, and the audience cheered when I told them what the movement had done for me, and that had it never done more in the North, it was worth more than all that had been expended upon it. I spoke what, in my heart, I felt to be true. But oh, friends, how it does vex me to think of the days when, with all my zeal for reform, the education of my children was neglected! My oldest son went forth to fight the battle of life with very little education, and far from being well fortified against the temptations of the world. He had been taught to drink at home; and when he left home, he did drink. He listed; he fought and fell in the battle-field; but while his death no doubt was a great grief to me, that grief was ten-fold intensified by the bitter reflection that I had set him the example of drinking. Oh, gentlemen, the thought of this is a severe sting in my conscience; and I can only seek God's forgiveness, and render to him a grateful heart, that through his grace I have been delivered out of my thralldom, and trust I may now say that I am one of his freemen."

Reader! whoever you are, but especially if you are a parent, will you not be persuaded to reflect on the

above narrative, and see to it that it be not with you as with this man? Allow me to submit to your common-sense if it would not be the best policy on your part, while contending for what reform in Church and State you think necessary, to abandon that practice that may enslave yourself, and cause reflections too bitter to be described. True! the man referred to burst the chains with which he had bound himself; but the bitter reflections caused by the example which he had set his family followed him to his dying hour; for he has passed away to another, and I believe a better world. And, remember, in order to secure the bitter reflections he had to endure, you don't require to become what the world calls a drunkard. What is mis-called respectable drinking is even more likely to secure you that; and remember, too, that while there is nothing about you, more than there was at one time about him, to prevent you becoming a drunkard, you may not be able to escape as he did. "The prudent man beholdeth the evil, and hideth himself."

The life of a temperance lecturer is very much like that of all others—made up of sunshine and shade; and yet it depends very much upon himself whether it be the one or the other. If he allows himself to brood over trials and annoyances that cross his path, these are certain to become tremendously magnified in his estimation, and he is sure to get into a shade dense enough; but, on the other hand, if he takes a comprehensive view of matters, and thinks of the object he has in view, and just does the best he can in whatever

circumstances he may be placed, he will find much more sunshine than shade. Indeed, the trials he sometimes meets with are so ludicrous that, with the exercise of patience and self-control, they may be turned into matters of amusement. The following are illustrations of such:—

A short time after my good and tried friend, Mr. M'Donald, had left the service of the League, and had accepted "a city charge," as, in his waggery, he styled it, I, for the first time, visited the village of D——. The secretary of the society there was a schoolmaster—a fine active young man. On arriving at his school, one of his pupils was desired to inform him that a person wished to speak with him. We were soon face to face. He gave me a hearty welcome, assuring me he was very glad to see me—that he had met with me previously in a different part of the country, although, perhaps, I would not remember him. He invited me into the school till he had finished a piece of work in which he was engaged. For a short time I found amusement in examining the pictures of birds and beasts with which the walls were adorned, and then sitting down, read a scene from "Macbeth." I had just finished reading the list of ingredients thrown by the witches into the caldron, to produce their hellish charm, when the master finished his delightful task for the day. A short time brought us to his dwelling, where we had tea, and spent two hours in conversation very happily. The hour of meeting was seven o'clock; and as we approached the school in which it was to be held, I said, "Master, is the place lighted?"—"No

fears of that, Mr. Easton," he said, "the shutters are on." Well, it might be as he said, but I was beginning to suspect that the shutters were on in more respects than one, but kept quiet. When we reached the door, we found a man standing with his hands in his breeches pockets. "John," inquired the master, in accents of surprise, "is the door not opened?"—"No, sir, there has been no person here."—"Oh, never mind, I'll soon put all right," said the master; and off he went, and shortly returned in such a flurry that he applied a lucifer-match to unlock the door, in place of the key! Perceiving his mistake, the lucifer was put aside, and kept for its proper use, and the key called into requisition. The door being opened, we three walked into where the audience should have been. Very fortunately, in its absence, there were the remains of a good fire, by the side of which I took a seat, trying hard to feel comfortable—a thing that would have been as impossible as to satisfy the cravings of hunger by thinking on a splendid feast, had I allowed my mind to run off in an ill-natured direction; but the opposite course was taken, and what might easily have been made a dark shade, was thereby made light, if not sunshine. Meantime, the master and John proceeded with the work of lamp-lighting, the former vowing vengeance upon the committee for their carelessness. I ventured to suggest that possibly the committee may have expected him to attend to such preliminaries. "No," he replied; "they had no right to expect that." Lamplighting having been completed, the master lifted a book and

proceeded to read, in excellent style, Longfellow's "Nil Desperandum," which seemed the most seasonable piece he could have selected. Having finished reading, he threw down the book, and gave his hands a clap, as if some grand idea had been suggested to his mind, and said, "I see how it is now, Easton,—Sandy has not yet arrived to call the meeting, and the people never stir out until they hear Sandy."—"What!" I asked, "Is that the drunken sinner that calls meetings in the neighbouring town?"—"Just the very man; he is a grand illustrative lecture of drink's doings. The last time he was here calling a meeting he was very drunk," said the master. I was just about to question the propriety of committees employing such a man to call meetings, when a knock was heard at the door. Away the master bounded to see who was there, and what was wanted. "Sandy, is that you?"—"Yes, sir."—"Why have you been so long in coming?"—"I was told to come at seven, sir."—"Man, it's long after seven; the meeting was to have been at seven. You should have been here by six. Away you go and call the meeting."—"And what have I to cry, sir?" asked Sandy. "Say that Mr. Easton, of the Scottish Temperance League, will deliver a lecture here—lecture to begin immediately."—"But where is here?" asked Sandy naively. "Is it in this school?"—"Yes, yes, it is in the school. Now, Sandy, let me hear what you'll say."—"Notice: Mr. George Easton, of the Scottish League, will deliver a lecture in the school to-night—to begin immediately. Collection at the door."—"No, Sandy, don't say anything

about collection. Now, that will do. Away you go, and let me see how smart you'll be." Having despatched Sandy, the master returned, and proceeded to read the well-known story of "Robert the Bruce and the Spider," which is well calculated to inculcate perseverance even when every ray of hope may be all but extinguished. I could not but admire the appropriateness of his selections, for most assuredly my hope of a meeting that night was very little. The truth is, "Bruce and the Spider" should have been studied by the committee a few days previous to the meeting; but that they certainly had not done.

At a quarter to eight there came in three or four men, a woman and two girls, and half-a-dozen dirty-faced boys. The master then took the chair, and, after opening the meeting with prayer, spoke to the following effect. "Friends, our village is a peculiar place. It is never without light. When the sky is clear, it has the light of the stars; and when the stars are covered with dark clouds, these reflect upon it the light of the furnace. Now, it would appear that our Temperance stars are under a cloud to-night—not visible at all; but in their absence we have Mr. Easton, like a great furnace, to give us light, and it is with pleasure that I now call upon him to shine forth."

On rising, I said, in a good-humoured manner, "Mr. Chairman, I am persuaded, from what has already transpired, that it is not so much light from the furnace that is required, as that your committee should be thrown into it, that they may thereby be

purged from the dross of mismanagement; and were the opportunity presented, that is what I would feel disposed to do. It is now an hour past the time for which the meeting was announced; and were I to lift my hat and leave, the act would be pardonable. Only, it would be unfair so to treat those who have come, because of the culpable carelessness of your committee. I will therefore give a brief address in the best manner possible."

For the sake of the cause, it is much to be regretted that the business element is not more attended to in general by committees. Men allow their names to be put on the committee, and pay no more attention to having the affairs of the society conducted in a business-like manner, than if they had no connection with it. They do not come together in order that matters may be properly arranged. A trusts to B, and B to C, and so on, and hence what everybody is expected to do, nobody does, and the cause is made to suffer. It is pleasing to know that the societies which have their affairs conducted in a systematic business-like manner are increasing in number. Let us trust that very soon it may be said that all of them are so conducted; for it is only when this is the case that any society can expect to thrive.

After a long experience, I do not know a more needful advice, and one which, if attended to, would do more to advance our cause, than that every man who allows his name to be put on a committee should make it a matter of conscience to attend as regularly as possible all its meetings—never to take offence if now

and again he should find himself in the minority; and when, on any occasion, he finds it impossible to attend, never to raise strife because of what may have been agreed upon in his absence. I have known the peace of a committee destroyed because, in the absence of one or two of its members, it had resolved to have *pies* at a soiree in place of *tea and cookies*! Another matter to be attended to is, that no member of committee—no matter what office he holds—should do anything that can possibly be avoided until he has first brought it before the committee; or if he is under the necessity of acting before that can be done, let a meeting be called as early as possible, and an explanation given. No man likes to be treated as a nonentity. Such treatment is certain either to cause him to lose all interest in the affairs of the society, or to rouse his indignation, and cause him to come forth and resent such proceedings. In either case the cause is made to suffer.

When spending an evening with a friend in 1856, whose name and residence I should like to know, he suggested that a temperance discourse might be got up, based on the 13th and 14th verses of the fourth chapter of the Book of Esther. The hint was acted upon, and the discourse delivered on several occasions. It was not, however, by any means a favourite with myself, and accordingly was thrown aside, and no more attention paid to it for a time. But one day, in 1859, when walking from Cummiston to Newdeer, in Aberdeenshire, the subject again came before my mind, and, before reaching my destination, the lessons it appeared to contain were arranged, and subsequently a discourse

embodying them was prepared. A portion of this discourse was afterwards delivered in the City Hall Saloon, Glasgow, under the auspices of the Glasgow Abstainers' Union, when I received a most attentive hearing; and as I believe it may be of some benefit to the Temperance cause, I beg to lay it before my readers.*

In the month of June, 1860, I visited the societies in Argyleshire, and among others the one in Campbellton, where strong drink, if not Satan, has its seat. Making libations for the high places of Bacchus is the staple trade of the place. At the time of my visit sixteen distilleries were in active operation. If any one is so stupid as to entertain doubts as to the drink-system being one of unmitigated wickedness, he had better go and spend a few days in Campbellton, as I did, and see the overwhelming destruction which is constantly being perpetrated upon the golden grain which a bountiful Creator gives, and which He has so explicitly declared is given for food to man.

We were once asked by a minister in Sutherlandshire if we considered it a sin to take a glass of whisky? We took the plan for which Scotsmen get credit, and answered this question by asking—"Is the moderate destruction of God's bounties a sin?"—"Well," he replied, "viewed in that light, you may make it out sinful." It must be viewed in every light: a bit of mutton is very good; but if it cannot be obtained except by dishonesty, its appearance on our table would be sinful.

* See Appendix C.

Whisky is not only unnecessary, but positively injurious, and is obtained at the expense of destroying good food—conduct which cannot be ranked among the things that are “*honest*.” The truth is, there are not a few who would be shocked were you boldly to tell them that it is sinful to take a glass of whisky, but who would whip their child severely were it to throw into the fire a much smaller portion of bread than the quantity required in the form of grain to produce their whisky. And yet, the only difference between them and the child is, that it throws the bread into the fire, and they convert the bread-corn into “fire-water,” and throw it into themselves. If the conduct of either party be sinful, say which; and if both, say which is most so. The visible sin in Campbelton is not only the destruction of good food, but the converting it into the most efficient instrument the devil employs to accomplish his diabolical ends amongst us. This conduct would be comprehensible were it that of those openly professing to serve him “with both hands earnestly;” but as the conduct of standard-bearers in the opposing army, it is to us an unsolvable riddle. Were Britain at war with any nation, and were any of her statesmen, while professing great patriotism, openly supplying her enemies with the most efficient weapons of warfare, they might expect to receive something more than a howl of indignation. Such a thing is not likely to occur; but go to Campbelton and you will see what is worse. There you will find a detachment of the Lord’s army assembled in battle array against the Prince of Darkness, every one having taken the

oath of allegiance to fight against the devil, the world, and the flesh. At the same time, you will find many of the officers and privates of that detachment working every day of the week, not that they may produce bread, iron, gas, or newspapers, but that they may supply the enemies against whom they profess to fight with their most efficient weapons. If such conduct is not worthy a howl of indignation, not a word should be said against the man who plays into the hands of the enemy of his country. And if ever I spoke out strongly, plainly, and indignantly upon such conduct, it was on the streets of Campbelton, as well as in one or two of its churches. No doubt, we roused the indignation of some; but that we secured the approbation of others, the following extract from the *Journal* of 14th June, 1860, will show:—

“SIR,—I was pleased to hear that Mr. Easton, one of your agents, who has been here (Campbelton) for a few days, was on Thursday presented with a very handsome Bible by a number of ladies, whose names are not known, through Mr. Hutcheson, one of the members of committee. The following inscription was written on the fly-leaf:—‘Presented to Mr. George Easton, from a few female friends in this place, as a small expression of their appreciation of his labours as a faithful, eloquent, and untiring advocate of total abstinence. Campbelton, 14th of June, 1860.’ The present was accompanied with the following address to Mr. Easton, for which, with the above, I hope you will find a corner in your *Journal*:—

‘Accept, dear friend, this little gift,
And with it wishes kind;
One cause unites us, and in it
Our hearts and hands are join’d.

'God speed thee in thy noble work!
His Spirit with thee go—
Help thee to plead the noble cause
That cares for drunkards' woe.

'Go on, and blessings on thee be;
God fill thy heart with love,
And give thy tongue more burning words,—
More fire from heaven above.

'Go, plead the wretched drunkards' cause,
And fight the drunkard's foe,
Which spreads o'er Britain's noble plains
Foul clouds of darkest woe!

'The happy time is coming fast
When, nought its light to mar,
Brightly shall shine o'er Britain's isle
The glorious temp'rance star.

'God bless our cause, and bless all those,
Like you, who for it fight;
We're on the winning side—and why?
Because we're in the right.

'Go on! our prayers will with thee go
Where'er thy footsteps turn;
And for the cause, with glowing love,
May thine and our hearts burn.

'Heaven speed thee in the cause we love,
And spare thee long to plead
Its claims on Christians, who would serve
Their God, and Christ, their living Head.

'Then, when life's journey we have done,
We'll hope to meet above;
There thou wilt know the friends who now
Are thine in Christian love.'

"CAMPBELTON, 14th June, 1860."

"CORR.

For various reasons I must pass over the incidents I met with during my travels from the date of my visit to Campbelton to the end of 1863, although many of these were very remarkable illustrations of drink's doings, and equally remarkable illustrations of reformations effected by means of abstinence.

In November, 1863, I received orders to attend the Annual Register Soiree of the Scottish Temperance League. Robert Smith, Esq., President of the League, occupied the chair; and the speakers on the occasion were the Rev. Messrs. Frame and Wallace, James Johnstone, Esq., Paisley, and myself. On being introduced to the meeting, after a few remarks from the chairman about the necessity of making my address very short, as Mr. Wallace had to follow me, I said,—

"Mr. Chairman and friends, it is now fourteen years, on the 1st of September last, since I entered the service of the Scottish Temperance League, and well do I remember, sir, that, after having served it three months, I was called in to attend the Annual Register Soiree, and give an account of my labours. The incidents I had met with during those three months, and which I related at the soiree, are as vividly before my mind to-night as they were then. Were I to adopt the same plan to-night, sir, as on the occasion referred to, and give an account of all the incidents I have met with since then, my strength and your patience would be thoroughly exhausted long before I had half done. I shall not, therefore, enter upon such a

task, but content myself by referring to three things very necessary to be kept in mind by all who desire to help on the Temperance cause, and thereby assist in bringing the drink-traffic to a perpetual end.

“In the first place, never forget you are not expected to work in behalf of this, or any good cause, with any other talents than those you possess. It is with what you have, and not with what you have not, that you are expected to toil in this or in any other department of God's work. Power is the limit of all responsibility. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles; neither does God demand of the man with one talent the work which only a man with five or ten could accomplish. Lose sight of this important fact, and you may spend life to little or no good purpose; but, keeping it constantly in view, you will be able to go through work that otherwise you would not have dared to enter upon. Forget such a fact, and you need not be surprised if, when you come to stand side by side with men of superior talent, you feel your heart becoming faint and your knees feeble; but when you keep in mind that it is only with your own alabaster box, and what it contains, that you are expected to serve this or any other good cause, you will be nerved for your work, and be all the more likely to reach that point where it may be said of you, as it was said of the woman of old, ‘They have done what they could.’ Let us all thank God and take courage. The man who cannot bring a lamb may bring two turtle doves, or two young pigeons, and be equally welcome. The man who cannot bring to this work transcendent talents, polished and refined by education, may, nevertheless, bring an honest heart, whose pulsations are in sympathy with it. The man who cannot consecrate to its service a hundred pounds a year may be able to give the widow's mite. How many apparently forget this, and refuse to do what they can, just because they cannot do all they would like, or all that another does! Had Mary thought in this way, and acted accordingly, the honourable mention made of her would never have been put on record. She had one box of ointment, and she did not remain inactive because she had

not ten; but with what she had she did what she could. This was expected from her, and nothing more, and nothing less is demanded from any. Let it be ours to strive to imitate her conduct. Not only is this necessary to our own comfortable, efficient working in behalf of the cause of abstinence, but equally so, that we may appreciate aright the labours of our fellow-workers. One star differs from another in glory, but they are all glorious, and they are all needed to make one gorgeous firmament. So with the workers of God's work. Their gifts and graces may and do differ just as the stars differ in glory, but they are all needed; and it is when they all come with what they possess, and do what they can, that one grand band of efficient workers is made up. In no single individual will you find all that constitutes a perfect workman. The ideal of such is only found in the united gifts of all who work. Were this kept in mind, none of us would be found murmuring, and holding up to contempt every one who did not come to this work, and work in it in the identical way which we think proper. It is when men forget the fact to which I have been referring that they become blind to the beauties of other men's sayings and doings in behalf of the good work, and get so thoroughly absorbed in self, that if they speak of others at all, it is to hold them up to ridicule. In the history of our movement we have had some painful illustrations of this, too wicked to be named.

But further, we must not neglect the important duty of learning accurately what we really do possess, so that we may know in what part of the work we are best fitted to do good. This may be a difficult task, but it is a most important one. From neglect of it, you may sometimes find among the cunning workmen those who, had they been among the hewers of wood and drawers of water, would have rendered far more efficient service, and *vice versa*. It is when the Hiram's are at the cunning workmanship, and the Sidonians at the hewing of wood and drawing of water, that the temple of temperance is certain to rise towards completion with greatest rapidity. One excels in one thing, another in another, while it is only

a very few who excel in whatever part of the work they engage in. For instance, one man preaches an excellent sermon in behalf of our cause, based upon the principle of Christian expediency; but when he passes from that, and plunges into the wine question (a question he has never thought out), he at once puts common-sense to the blush, and gratifies every drinker of wine. No doubt, when circumstances demand, we ought to do our best in every department of temperance work to which we may be called; but if we would render it the greatest possible service, our duty evidently is to try and find out, by every legitimate means, what part of the work we are best adapted for, and make it our special aim to do it. Moses was not eloquent, and, knowing that he was not, he refused to go and speak to the people. Aaron accordingly was appointed to go with him and perform that part of the mission, and the two together, under God, accomplished a great work. Let the kings among us fight with the armour of a king, and the Davids with their respective slings and stones, and let not the one, while the battle rages, quarrel with the other because of the difference of weapons, and the downfall of this modern Goliath will, under God, be all the sooner accomplished.

“Yet another thing must be remembered if we are to do what we can, and it is this,—what we can do must be done *now*. I have sometimes heard the remark made, ‘Well, I am certain I have no desire for great riches,—only, I should like to have so and so, and I should be quite content.’ Now, while this may be self-deception, it is certainly consummate nonsense; for while it is right and commendable to strive to better our circumstances, to be content is our duty *now*, and contentment is quite compatible with striving to better our circumstances. If, however, we are not content where we are, and with what we have, how do we afford proof that we should be so were we attaining other and better circumstances. So also in reference to other matters. It is not at some future time, when we shall have become wealthy, and our political and social power has increased, that God demands our support to this good work, but *now*. I frequently meet with parties professing

great abhorrence of drunkenness and the drink-traffic, who, when requested to join our temperance crusade against both the one and the other, refuse, assuring us that they go much farther than we do, inasmuch as they are striving to get Government to grant them power to vote the traffic altogether out of existence some morning before the dinner hour. Now, this is all very fine talking, and serves very well to swell a platform peroration, but to us it is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal so long as the parties not only refuse to wield the power they have against the traffic, but continue to give it moral and material support. Only those who are sound on "Abstinence" can be sound Prohibitionists. Now, do not misunderstand me. I hold it to be right and proper that we should by every fair and honest means strive to increase our power politically and otherwise, that on every besitting occasion we may wield it against the traffic; but if we do not wield against it the power we do possess, what guarantee do we afford that we should do so were our power increased in every respect? If you cannot at present vote the traffic out of anywhere else, you can vote it out of your own little republic, and by doing that you will give strong presumptive evidence that when it can be done you will cheerfully vote it out of the kingdom. The man who will not prohibit the traffic within the boundaries over which he has control, but strives to obtain power to prohibit it elsewhere, reminds me very much of the man who refused to resist the devil with the power God had given him, because that power was not sufficient to chain up the evil one in his own dominions. The language of every earnest man, when advocating the Temperance cause, ought to be, 'Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give unto thee,' and give it *now*. In this way he will afford satisfactory proof that should his capabilities of assisting it be increased, they will be at its service. He that is faithful over a few things shall be accounted worthy of being made ruler over many things; but he who does not place the few things he possesses at the service of this good cause cannot deserve to be put in possession of more. Come on with

the power you have, and come now. That is all that God demands. It will never be asked, 'How much power did you wield against the traffic, and in favour of the Temperance enterprise?' but, 'With what power you had, did you do what you could?' What a miserable reply to such a question will it be to say, 'We had the power of giving support to the latter, and withdrawing from the former, but we did not do that, thinking it better to sail with the current until Government should interfere, and prohibit the traffic altogether.' Well might the reply be, 'Thou fool, thou oughtest first to have done thine own duty in the matter, and then have urged others to do theirs.' Had Mary never gone to the house of Simeon, nor honoured her Master till a majority of her people had voted she should, she never would have gone at all. If men will support the traffic until a majority, in and out of parliament, vote it a nuisance, they never shall, and they do not deserve to see that brand put upon its forehead. Vote it a nuisance now, and act towards it as such in your individual character, and then, whatever you may get Government or any other party to do afterwards, it shall be said of you in reference to this matter, as it was of Mary—'They have done what they could.'

"In a word, let each of us so work as that we shall be constrained to say, with Lord Brougham, 'There is not only profit and great usefulness, but great pleasure and comfort in work. All well-regulated minds must feel that the worst work of all is to have no work to do.' And if we live to see the day when our work as Temperance reformers has been completed, and we can find nothing else to do, we can take down the scaffolding, and engage in praising God for the building."

After the meeting at which the above address was delivered, I was chiefly engaged till February, 1864, attending temperance festivals. Thereafter, beginning at Beith, I went through Ayrshire, taking all the

towns and villages along the coast, and then through Wigtonshire and the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, landing at Dumfries, where I had one meeting. Leaving Dumfries, I visited the societies up 'the Nith, and finished my tour at Kirkconnel. Thence, on the morning of 28th April, I went direct to Glasgow, for the purpose of meeting my eldest daughter, who had been six years in America, and whom I had trysted to meet me there that morning. She was standing on the railway platform waiting my arrival—having reached Glasgow four hours before me. I mention this as illustrative of the punctuality with which, as a rule, travelling can be accomplished in our day.

Having been appointed one of the speakers at our annual meetings, which were just at hand, I was not asked to undertake more work until they were past. On the Monday evening, our worthy president, as usual, occupied the chair. The speakers were the Rev. Mr. Hannay, London; Dr. Johnstone, Limekilns; George Roy, Esq., author of *Generalship*, &c., and myself. To be told to make a good pointed speech, and be very brief, produces sensations very similar to a twitch of toothache: and never having been able to discover any good reason why a speech should be a better one for Edinburgh and Glasgow than for Banff or Banchory, I took the measuring-rod handed to me, and measured off a section from one that had previously done duty. Whether it possessed the other requisite or not, may be very doubtful, but it was the right length to a hair's-breadth. Reader, judge for yourself.

"It affords me great pleasure to have the opportunity on the present occasion of saying a few words in behalf of a cause with which I have been identified for more than five and twenty years. Although it has not very often been my lot to address a meeting in this hall, I cannot plead that I am unaccustomed to public speaking; neither can I plead ignorance of the important movement that has brought us together; nor of the particular association under whose auspices we are to-night met, having for nearly fourteen years been engaged as one of its agents, publicly advocating the claims of true temperance—the temperance of science and Scripture, in opposition to a spurious counterfeit one, from whence flows all the grosser forms of intemperance for which our country is so notorious.

"Situated as I have been for such a length of time, I might have embraced this opportunity to contrast the present condition and prospects of the Temperance movement in general, and of the Scottish Temperance League in particular, with what they were when, rather more than fourteen years ago, I addressed the annual meeting of the League, held in a small hall in this large city. Such a subject, however, presents too wide a range to be entered upon on the present occasion. Let it suffice to say, that if this annual meeting, contrasted with the one referred to, be a true index of the state of matters, then has the power of the League greatly increased and its prospects improved.

"For the short time that has been placed at my disposal this evening, I purpose calling your attention to an objection with which we were very familiar more than twenty years ago. It was then thought to have been laid in a grave from which it would never have a resurrection; but this expectation has been disappointed. The objection has been dug from its resting-place, and has had fresh life breathed into it by a certain class of the patronizers of the deceptive drug. Accordingly, of late years—more especially during the late revival—has it been met with, opposing our cause with even more than its

youthful vigour. The objection to which I refer, is, '*If you would preach the Gospel as earnestly and perseveringly as you do temperance, the cause of God would progress much more rapidly.*'

"In replying to such an objection, I always feel as if treading upon delicate ground; not because there is in it anything formidable, but lest, in dealing with it, offence should be given to a weak brother, or the scoffer have reason to think I set lightly by the Gospel. Nothing can ever be a substitute for the Gospel; and no work, however important, can be an excuse for neglecting its claims; and the work of proclaiming it is the most glorious in which man can engage. But, while all this is true, it should not be forgotten that if the claims of the Gospel are to be responded to, other work than what is strictly speaking proclaiming it must be attended to. For instance, if a sea roll between the preacher and the unconverted, as '*Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,*' the two must be brought together. That this may be accomplished, we are called upon to exercise self-denial, and give of our time and our money, that the mission-ship may be built. But shipbuilding is not Gospel-preaching; nevertheless, it is a work that must be attended to, if the Gospel is to be preached to every creature. But suppose it to be '*the bottle,*' in place of the sea, that stands between the preacher and the unconverted, again we say, '*Exercise self-denial, and break it;*' and to do so, we maintain, is as much the duty of a Christian in the one case, as shipbuilding is in the other.

"King Hezekiah could neither be said to be repairing the house of the Lord, nor serving in his temple, while he was engaged in the work of removing the high places of Baal; but what he did in that way was right in the sight of the Lord, inasmuch as it was necessary to break off the people from idolatry, and bring them back to the house of the Lord.

"In working to remove the high places of Bacchus—public and private—we do not profess to be directly engaged in preaching the Gospel; but we maintain that the removal of these places is, as to the success of that preaching, what the

removal of the high places of Baal was to the re-establishing of the worship of God in the days of good King Hezekiah. When by means of an earthquake the terror-stricken jailer at Philippi was about to commit suicide, Paul, before preaching the Gospel to him, said, '*Do thyself no harm.*' In order to preach the Gospel with success to the victims of drink, '*Do thyself no harm*' is an advice as necessary to be given as it was when Paul stood in the presence of the trembling jailer. Paul wrought with his hands, that he might not hinder the Gospel, and certainly would have felt surprised had he been told that the work of God would prosper better were he to go and preach the Gospel and leave off tent-making, when he was busy working that he might not hinder it. We practise abstinence, and advocate its claims, for the same reason. Again, Paul became all things to all men, that he might win some to God; but how many preachers of the Gospel are there who are quite ready to become lecturers upon almost anything, for the benefit of their fellow-men, who, nevertheless, loathe the idea of lecturing upon Temperance, as understood by us, and who, if requested to put themselves in a position for doing so, would in all probability begin and talk to you about their Christian liberty, and conclude by assuring you their hope is in the Gospel. I have no hesitation in saying that such parties take a very narrow view of the Gospel and of the Christian's constant prayer—'*Thy Kingdom come*'—if they do not perceive that everything that tends to the welfare of the race socially, mentally, morally, and, in a stricter sense, spiritually, comes within the range of Christian aspiration and Christian effort; and if, to all their other philanthropic and benevolent movements which they support, they would add that of Temperance, they would find themselves in possession of a power by which they should be able to do a vast deal more to advance the Gospel than ever they have been able to accomplish without it.

Surely the parties who advance this objection do not require to be told that to construct a printing-press or ocean-steamer is not to preach the Gospel; and yet such work is most befitting the Christian—not so much with a view to divi-

dends, although there is no good reason why these should be lost sight of, but as a means by which he may be better able to carry out the royal commission. The parties who first invented and constructed such things did a work that has done, and is doing more to evangelize and civilize the world than if they had increased mission funds and missionaries an hundredfold. And why? not because their work was higher, holier, or more important than that of the missionary, but because it afforded facilities for propagating the truth, that otherwise could never have been enjoyed. With the assistance of the printing-press and railway, many of our preachers can, and every week do, reach the minds of as many thousands with the truths of the Gospel as there are individuals beneath the roofs of their churches on Sabbath. The truth is, had Paul lived in our day, with the facilities we have for travelling and transmitting our thoughts, he could in one year have done as much of that work for which he was so famous as he could have done in ten when he lived. And although there is no direct command in Scripture for constructing a printing-press, railway, or steam-ship, I feel very confident that had Paul lived *now*, he would have been, if not a director or shareholder, an extensive patronizer of all the three; and would have given thanks that by means of them he was able to plant more churches, and revisit and water them more abundantly. He would not have objected to their being constructed, upon the grounds that preaching the Gospel was a more important work: and when constructed, he would not have refused to avail himself of the facilities they afforded him in doing his Master's work, because many connected with them were not thoroughly orthodox. No; it would have been sufficient for him to know that in themselves they were really good, and well fitted to assist him in doing good. With a good supply of cheap Gospel tracts, there can be no doubt he would have paid his ticket, asking no questions as to the various parties who made and managed the railway: and off he would have gone with a willing heart to plant a church here, and water another there, &c. Indeed, all Christians are ready to admit that the printing-press and railway institutions

afford the Church great facilities in doing their Master's work. How, then, does it happen that so many Christians have so many objections to Temperance institutions? Well, it is rather puzzling to know why they should; inasmuch as all that we intend by advocating their claims in a religious point of view is, that the preacher may have a people sober, clothed, and in their right mind, with whom to deal. It would, we think, be a very easy matter to prove, that were Christian people in general to enter with as much heart into the support of the Temperance movement as they have done into the support of other auxiliary agencies, the success of the Gospel-preacher would be greatly increased. The most difficult thing satisfactorily to account for is, not the fact that they have not done so, but the animus which not a few of them cherish against the movement. In the meantime, let them be assured of this, that it is not because we set lightly by the Gospel, but because we believe in its transcendent importance, that we are so anxious that they should join us in our crusade against the whole drink-system. There is one thing which it appears they overlook, or altogether ignore, of which I wish to remind them,—that in the Bible we are warned not only against drunkenness, but against the drunkard's drink. It was surely not without an object that God inspired his servant Solomon to characterize it as a mockery and deceiver. It was not in vain—God does nothing in vain—that He inspired holy men of old to symbolize the properties of such drink by the serpent's bite, the adder's sting, the poison of dragons, and the venom of asps: it was not in vain that He inspired these men to warn us against it, both by example and by solemn admonition; and I fear it was not without evidence of its powerfully enslaving nature, and a clear knowledge of its unchanging character, that the inspired writer puts into the mouth of its victim, when standing on the very brink of the pit of despair—the forked flames that shall never be quenched all but surrounding him—these emphatic words,—‘I will seek it yet again.’ If all this be not to warn us against the drink of the drunkard, language has no meaning. Depend upon it, the ordinary use of an article

so spoken of in God's Word cannot be other than inimical to the propagation of the Gospel, and to the growth of grace in the individual soul. Nothing is more evident than that the whole tendency of the drink is to destroy in the soul anything like real devotion, as well as to wipe away good impressions formerly made, while its long-continued use so destroys the faculties of the soul that, humanly speaking, there remains little hope of ever being able to make a good impression there. Such cases are by no means rare. Would they were! Men there are in hundreds whose consciences, through the deceptive drink, have become seared as with a hot iron, so that, in the emphatic language of Scripture, they are 'twice dead.' Talk of preaching the Gospel to such a class! In the words of one of your own ministers, 'you may as well preach it to the walls of their miserable dwellings.' And why men who profess to have such an ardent love for the success of the Gospel do not assist us to have that drink taken out of the way, is a problem I do not profess to be able to solve. In the meantime, before sitting down, bear with me while I warn you all to beware of tampering with that deceptive drink, the very nature of which is to injure and destroy the powers of the soul by which you are capable of holding converse with things around and above. Never forget that you are thinking, rational, accountable beings—beings that are called upon to be kings and priests unto God for ever. Never forget the promise of our Elder Brother,—'To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.' Let, then, your prayer, your daily prayer be,—'Lord, preserve me and mine from tampering with that which not only possesses the power of impairing the faculties of my soul, but also of reducing me, a creature created in thine own image, to a piece of disorganized matter, of which it may be said, even while it breathes, "*It cannot think.*"

"One word to the Temperance friends, and I have done—

'Rise, gird you for true labour,
Rise, gird you for the fight;
Go forth to earth's old battle-field,
Strike boldly for the right
Rise, cast your dreamings from you,
Rise, clothed in vigour new;
This fallen earth's no place for rest,—
Arise, go forth and do.'"

Immediately after our annual meetings of 1864, I was appointed to visit the inland societies of Ayrshire. There were various incidents that were met with during that tour, of which I took a note at the time, and from which I select the following:—When walking from Kilmarnock to Tarbolton, I observed on a rocky summit several cages, each containing a bird, placed among the rocks. The reason why such things were there was to me a puzzle. However, this was soon explained by a young man, who, in answer to my question, informed me they were there for the purpose of catching wild birds. The impression made on my mind at the time was, that the whole affair was a piece of idle cruelty, and I thought nothing more of it, until, one Sabbath shortly after, I heard a worthy minister, in the midst of an excellent sermon, tell of having on one occasion met with a thing of the same sort. Like myself, he had been puzzled at the sight; but when, in answer to his question, he was informed "that these were tamed birds, kept there for the purpose of catching the wild ones," he could at once turn his information to good account, and say, "The very reason why God keeps a tamed sinner in this outer temple—a wild bird, tamed by his grace, and kept there, and used as an instrument by which to catch the wild

ones." On hearing the above scene so well applied, I felt annoyed that such an application had never occurred to my mind. Having caught the idea, however, another was thereby at once suggested—viz., that there are evidently a great number of professedly tamed birds that do not put themselves to very much trouble about catching the wild *anes*—especially if, to do so, personal sacrifice or self-denial be required. Often, in my experience, have I been surprised at the readiness with which some men will subscribe liberally for the conversion of the natives of Africa or India, who would not banish drink from their tables, in order to save even a member of their own family from drunkenness. Such conduct is not easily accounted for. Perhaps it is no breach of charity to suppose that, in many cases, the subscription is parted with, and the wine-decanter held fast, in obedience to the tyranny of fashion; or it may be because "Distance lends enchantment to the view." It does appear to be considered by many a greater triumph to save men from Bhuddism in India, than from Bacchus in Scotland. At all events, if a man with a yearly income of ten thousand were to subscribe a thousand a year to accomplish the former work, the Church to which he belongs would almost be disposed to canonize him as a saint of the first magnitude; but if, to accomplish the latter, he were to empty his cellar, and banish from his table all that can intoxicate, he would be looked upon as a well-meaning, weak sort of brother, troubled with a crotchet. Whatever may be the reason why so many rejoice over good done at a distance by the self-

denial of others, and yet refuse to act upon the same principle, that a similar good may be accomplished at their own door, I cannot say, but very frequently in my travels have I met with illustrations of the principle.

One day when about to step into a railway carriage, I noticed two very gaily dressed ladies sitting. Their whole appearance was so much like "*first class*" that for a moment I halted to make sure that the carriage was *third*. Satisfied that such was the case, I stepped in and took my seat. We had not travelled far when, halting at a wayside station, the door of our compartment opened, and there upon the platform stood a poorly clad woman, with a child about three years of age in her arms. I put out my hand, and assisted them into the carriage, while the two ladies crept as close as possible to the opposite side, one saying to the other in a whisper, "That's what we get for travelling third class." I felt somewhat indignant at this, and resolved that should an opportunity occur, they would not be allowed to escape without a courteous rebuke.

A soldier who had just returned from the Crimean War was sitting in the compartment next to ours, and an inquisitive rustic was asking him a number of absurd questions. I suggested to the soldier the propriety of advising his friend to volunteer his services to put down the Russian Bear the next time he showed his teeth, and he would then learn experimentally all that he was now so anxious to know about.

The two ladies referred to were very desirous of

knowing if the soldier had ever met with that benevolent Christian lady, as they very justly styled her, Miss Nightingale. They were evidently, judging from what they said, great admirers of her self-sacrificing conduct, and only longed for an opportunity that they might imitate her. At their request, I asked the soldier if ever he had seen Miss Nightingale. He replied, that for three months, when lying wounded in one of the hospitals, he had seen her almost every day; and that to her, he and many others might say they owed their lives. All this, together with all the information obtained upon the subject, was duly retailed to the two ladies, with the following remark: "That had Miss Nightingale been present with us, it was more than probable she would have been drawn towards this poor woman and her child, and done something to assist them; and if we really admired her conduct in the Crimea, we could not do better than imitate it this morning in the carriage. While saying so, I handed the poor woman a few coppers, and her child some confections that a kind confectioner in Perth had presented me with. It was very evident the two ladies understood me, and were not a bit too well pleased with what I considered a very courteous and seasonable rebuke. They did not, however, honour Miss Nightingale, no not to the extent of speaking a kind word to the poor woman; and for what I did in her behalf, no credit is due, because it was more for the purpose of rebuking the ladies than of benefiting her that I so acted.

In 1864, when labouring in one of the southern

counties of Scotland, another incident illustrative of the same principle as the above was communicated by one of the friends of Temperance. Two men, one of them a shrewd working-man, the other somewhat higher in the social scale, were standing one evening at the cross of the county town, conversing on various topics, when a fussy sort of gentleman, considered rather wealthy, and who was always talking about what great acts of benevolence he was to perform if this, that, and the other arrangements were made, joined them, and began to talk very fluently about Africa and its prospects, and finished by saying, in a rather pompous style, "If I could only get arrangements made to secure a negro boy—a real black—I would bestow upon him a classical education." The man to whom he had been more particularly addressing himself thought that such a boy might be obtained at no great expense or trouble. The working-man, looking Africa's patron in the face, asked rather naïvely, "Sir, wad a dirty white ane no do as weel? There's plenty o' that kin' i' this toon to be had without either trouble or expense."

It would be very improper to say, or even to insinuate, anything against what is being done to deliver men from heathenish idolatry; but it is impossible sometimes to keep from both thinking and saying, that if greater personal, united, and well-directed effort were put forth to save ourselves from the drink idolatry, it would be much more to the credit of our Christian consistency, than as it is at present, when scarcely a man can be set apart to the

work of pulling down the strongholds of the devil in heathen lands unless homage, less or more, be paid to the god of wine. There cannot be a doubt but success in the enterprise of pulling down that stronghold of sin and Satan would proportionally increase our power for usefulness in foreign lands. Drink, cursed drink, is most emphatically the devil's bird-lime, by which he succeeds in holding fast thousands of our countrymen, in defiance of every fashionable effort made to save them. Now, were Christians, by the simple means of "abstinence," to set themselves in thorough earnest to wrest this weapon for evil out of Satan's hand, they would at once secure to themselves great good, and, as tamed birds, be much more successful in catching wild *anes* at home and abroad. It is a pity that a plan so simple and so available to all, and, if acted upon, so certain to gain the end desired by every Christian, should be despised, and that others of a complicated, expensive, and uncertain nature should be preferred. What *great* thing would not the Christian people of Scotland undertake, were they assured that on its completion the country should ever afterwards be free from drunkenness? Were that great thing to be the raising of six millions of money, they would undertake to raise it in twelve months, and consider they had made a good bargain; but when you show them a plan by which they may save six millions, and gain the same end, the bulk of them will treat you and it with masked contempt, and very likely throw in your teeth Paul's advice to Timothy no longer to drink water, but

to take a little wine for his stomach's sake and his often infirmities. We do believe that there is not a practical opposer of our plan, upon the fleshy tablets of whose heart this advice is not written as with an iron pen. Whatever powers of retention they may lack in reference to other matters, they all have sufficient to retain every word contained in it, and on all occasions are quite able to repeat it without a stammer. The author of the *Eclipse of Faith* has a dream, to the effect that the Bible in one night had become an entire blank; and he furnishes his readers with an account of the strange phenomena consequent thereupon, and then he supposes that Christians of every name and denomination are invited each to contribute as much of the book as they distinctly remember, that the world may again be put in possession of the precious boon. Were this to become a reality, and no dream, we are disposed to believe that there would be thousands whose minds would be entirely oblivious to all that Paul had said about abstinence from wine for a brother's sake, who would be quite able to supply very accurately, and without any misgiving, his advice to Timothy, to "take a little wine for his stomach's sake." It really does appear to us that our opponents do not deal honestly by Paul, inasmuch as when he prescribes wine for his stomach's sake, they accept him as an authority; but when he prescribes abstinence from wine for a brother's sake, they hold him of every little account. Now, to say the very least of it, this is treating Paul very uncourteously; and no doubt, were he to appear amongst us, he would resent it with

all that manly dignity which ever characterized him.

As abstainers, we have no desire to set Paul against himself. We believe he was consistent in all he taught. While, therefore, we appeal to him as an undoubted authority for practising abstinence from wine for a brother's sake, we believe his advice to Timothy does not in any way run counter to that. On the contrary, we believe there is perfect harmony between the two; and were it not that men have a special end to serve, they would have no difficulty in seeing that such is the case.

As abstainers from the dietetic use of alcohol, we have no objection to doctors prescribing whatever they think proper. Paul, we know, did prescribe for an ailment, and thereby sanctioned medical treatment; and were any party setting themselves to oppose that, Paul might very properly be quoted against them: but we submit to the good sense of the reader if it be not too bad to prescribe a decoction, merely because it is called wine, and then quote Paul as an authority for so doing. Does not honesty demand that before they do this, they should first be certain that what they prescribe is the same in kind with what Paul prescribed. In place of doing so—honest, simple-minded men, as no doubt they are—they assume that such is the case. What Paul prescribed was called wine, and what they prescribe is also called wine, and this for them is quite sufficient. They have no idea of the possibility of things being called by the same name, and yet being different in character. Of course, they never dream

that there is such a thing in the world as a good man or a bad man. Not they. If they require the services of a man, they take the first that comes to hand, irrespective of character. Substitute the term *wine* for *man*, and you have at once a correct account of how they go to work. It matters nothing to them what ingredients enter into the composition of any decoction, only call it wine, and, in their estimation, wine it is, although it may have no more connection with the vine than the ink with which we are writing has. Hence they proceed, with all complacency, to prescribe it as a medicine, and justify their conduct upon the ground that Paul prescribed wine to Timothy. Courteous reader, do not misunderstand me. I do not object (to do so would be presumption) to doctors prescribing whatever, in their wisdom, they think proper, no matter by what name it is called, or of what it is composed; but I do most emphatically object to their prescribing decoctions perfectly unknown in Paul's day, and then quoting him as an authority for their conduct. It may be that the various compounds which in our day are called wine are in some cases good as medicine. We cannot tell; but suppose they were, what then? Why, if you have faith in your medical adviser, accept them when he so orders, and justify your conduct upon what ground you please; but do not attempt to do so by the plea that Paul prescribed such things, until you have first proved that such was the case—a thing, I venture to predict, you will never accomplish. That Paul prescribed wine I readily admit; but I have a right to raise the question, "What kind

of wine was it? Was it the simple fermented juice of the grape, or was it wine both fermented and drugged?" I readily confess my inability to say what kind it was, but have sufficient confidence in Paul to believe that it would be such as was fitted to relieve Timothy's ailment. What that ailment was, is equally uncertain. We know, indeed, that what was prescribed was for his stomach's sake and often infirmities; but we know also that the stomach is subject to various ailments, and that often infirmities are equally various; and it is not said which of all these varieties Timothy laboured under. Had the kind of wine prescribed been definitely stated, then a medical man might have guessed pretty accurately the disease; or, had the disease been definitely stated, then the kind of wine might have been inferred; because Paul was no quack. What he did, we may well suppose, was done intelligently. He was an educated man, and, moreover, Luke, who was a physician, had been with him for a long time as a fellow-labourer. But there is no such definiteness as regards either the disease or the medicine prescribed; and since, no doubt, in Paul's day, as in our own, there were a variety of stomach ailments, and we are certain that there were a variety of wines—some fermented, others fermented and drugged, and others unfermented—it is impossible to say what was the kind of wine he prescribed to Timothy. In these circumstances, then, the most that can legitimately be made of his advice to Timothy is, that, when ailing, we should be quite right to accept whatever the best medical skill we can obtain prescribes. But is Paul's prescribing a certain kind of

wine to a man when ailing any good reason for our conduct in drinking every abominable compound called wine when we are in perfect health? Because he prescribed wine for some particular ailment of the stomach, is that any reason why we should drink everything called wine in our day, for a pain in our great toe, or because we are going to preach a sermon, or because we have been preaching one; because we are going to walk, or have been walking; because one person has died, or another has been born? Most assuredly not! There never was a prescription so thoroughly abused as this of Paul's to Timothy. Let the reader think of it for a moment. Paul prescribed *wine* to a man when ailing, and the great majority of our healthy countrymen make every occasion an occasion for drinking wine, whisky, brandy, gin, and so on. Paul advised a man who had evidently been a water-drinker to take a *little* wine, and thousands who seldom taste water, but drink what is called wine, and whisky, copiously, have the consummate assurance to refer to his conduct as being a justification of their folly. We are fully persuaded that if such parties could consult Paul, he would advise them, for their stomach's sake, no longer to drink such beverages, but to have recourse to honest water. In that case, it is more than likely they would throw him overboard as no authority upon such a subject, and betake themselves to the advice of Solomon as travestied by Robert Burns,

"Gie him strong drink until he wink,
That's sinking in despair,"

very conveniently forgetting that the wise man has said

elsewhere, "*Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*"

The above was written on the 14th of May, while residing in Mrs. Robertson's Temperance Hotel, Kilmarnock, and in the beginning of June I sailed from Granton to Orkney, thence to Lerwick, and then to Wick; and, passing through the counties of Caithness, Sutherland, and Ross, and spending seven days in Aberdeen, I reached home after an absence of ten weeks. After enjoying a fortnight of holidays, I resumed work at Perth, in company with Mr. James Turnbull, of Keir Street Academy, Edinburgh, who at that time had kindly volunteered his services to the League for a fortnight, but who now, I am proud to say, has become one of its regular agents. We laboured happily together for two weeks, and parted company at Invereshie—he returning to Edinburgh to prosecute the delightful task, as it has been styled, of teaching the young idea how to shoot, and I to prosecute my equally necessary, if not equally pleasant, work. It was now for the first time that I began to endure the agonies of suspense. I had left behind me a beloved daughter, who for some time had been in a declining state of health, and every letter I received went to cut from beneath me every ground of hope, until I felt in the position of hoping against hope. When, in the end of November, I arrived at Fraserburgh, the intelligence received was such that I could no longer prosecute my

labours. Leaving the remainder of my appointments to be taken up by the Rev. Mr. M'Gowan, of Newpitsligo, and Mr. Dunachie, I hastened home, and had the unspeakable pleasure, and I may add profit, of assisting to wait upon, comfort, and instruct my dying daughter, whose death took place on the last day of 1864. Her end was peace—nay, more, it was triumphant. Perhaps the reader will pardon a father's feelings, whose heart bleeds over the departure of one he held so dear, for giving here a brief extract from an account of her death written by one who knew her well, and which appeared in the *League Journal* shortly afterwards :—

“During the night previous to her death she was very tranquil, and as was our wont, and her peculiar delight, family worship was conducted in her chamber. The 14th chapter of John was the portion selected for reading. Shortly after she fell into a quiet sleep, which continued till nine in the morning. Then she began to feel a fluttering of the heart, which she requested me to try and stop. I went for the physician, who came very shortly to her, and prescribed a gentle stimulant, which quieted her considerably. She then desired all in the house to be brought into the room, and when they were all assembled, she asked me to read the 14th chapter of John, which she evidently followed, for as we came to the conclusion, she said along with the reader, ‘Arise, let us go hence,’ in a soft yet clear voice. After this she thrice requested her father to pray with her, a short interval elapsing between each prayer. Seeing her friends weeping, she said, ‘Do not weep—I have not done so,’ and began and repeated the two following verses of that beautiful hymn, ‘Just as I am :’—

‘Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

'Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot;
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!'

"After a little while she added—

'On the other side of Jordan,
In the sweet fields of Eden,
There is rest for the weary,
There is rest for *me*.'

emphasizing particularly the *me*. She then asked all who were in the room to kiss her, and, beginning with her father and mother, they one after the other bent over the couch and took a tender, loving farewell of the dying one. She then desired us all to stand up, that she might see us once more, when, bowing her head, she said, 'Good-by *all*,' and lifting her attenuated arms, she exclaimed, 'Jesus, my Jesus, come quickly!' then crossing her hands on her bosom, with a beautiful smile passing over her face, she 'fell asleep.'"

However calculated to lacerate the feelings, it was a glorious sight for father and mother, brother and sister, lover and friend, to see one they loved so dearly meet the "king of terrors and the terror of kings" with a smile, virtually saying, "O Death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

No sooner were my many friends made aware of the sad bereavement with which we had been visited, than letters full of Christian sympathy came pouring in from every part of Scotland,—letters which I could previously have appreciated, but never estimated at their true value till now. They were felt to be precious

documents by us, and under God served as a balm in assisting to heal our bleeding hearts. From the heart do I return my sincere thanks to their respective writers. If the sympathy of Christian friends be so great and so precious, how much more that of our Elder Brother, from whom it all emanates! Let us together exalt *His* name.

From the beginning of 1865 till the annual meetings of the League, my mind was not in a condition for keeping a note of the many incidents that were met with, and I did not make the attempt. In the month of June I was appointed to labour in Dundee and neighbourhood, where, along with my dear friend and fellow-labourer, Mr. M'Lean, I addressed open-air meetings almost every night for three weeks; I then, along with my equally-devoted friend, Mr. Dunachie, addressed open-air meetings in Greenock for a fortnight. And now I have to record what to me has been the saddest event of my life. Owing to circumstances, the friends in Greenock resolved that on the 7th of July we should not attempt a meeting; I therefore embraced the opportunity of going home for a night. When I reached Edinburgh, there came a letter from my daughter-in-law, informing us that her husband, our eldest son James, who ever since the death of his sister had been complaining, and who had gone to the country to enjoy a month's holidays, was evidently becoming worse, and that they would be home on the following day in order to consult our medical adviser. On Saturday, at 1 p.m., I met them at the railway station, and conducted them to my own

house. At 4 p.m. I had to leave for Greenock, where, along with Mr. Dunachie, I had to speak on the Sabbath evening. Little did I think, on leaving my room, when with his wonted cheerfulness my son had said "Good-by, father," that it was to be the last time I was to hear his voice in this world; but so it was. He died on Monday, July 10th, at 6 p.m. From the mismanagement of parties yet unknown, the telegram sent at the time to Greenock never reached me, and it was not till Tuesday at 3 p.m., when I had arrived at Mr. Drummond's Hotel, Glasgow, that I received a telegram announcing the melancholy news. But for the knowledge that my son had for years been resting upon the finished work of Jesus, I think this second billow of the Almighty would have entirely overwhelmed me. It did not come like the first, perceptibly and quietly, but burst upon me like an unexpected tornado. When I reached home I had the consolation of learning that on the day previous to his death, he said to his mother, in the presence of Mr. Moffat, from Greenock, "I think I may get better; but so far as death is concerned I am prepared for it." "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" My bleeding heart prevents me at present saying more concerning the departed than this, that for the thirty years he lived under my roof he never gave me a vexed heart. As a tribute of respect to his memory and worth, the reader will pardon me for giving one of the many letters of sympathy received from kind friends immediately after his death.

A—N, 17th July, 1865.

MY DEAR EASTON,—I cannot tell you how deeply affected I have been by the tidings of James' death; it came upon me without the ordinary warning that tends to make the final severance of earthly ties bearable. I did not so much as know that he had been ailing, and it never would have occurred to me as probable that he would have been removed from amongst us at so early a period of life. The healthy action of his bodily activities always led me to conclude that he was constitutionally free from liability to those ailments that usually shorten life. In these circumstances, you cannot realize my feelings and frame of mind, no more than I can yours, on hearing the sad news that I should see *him* no more in this life, to whom I had become so devotedly and sincerely an attached friend. Great indeed must be the bereavement to you and his mother, for you have lost the society of as pure-minded and manly a son as ever parents could desire. Few or none of those that did not constitute your family had better opportunities than myself of estimating the intrinsic worth and excellence of his character. You know that some years ago I was with him daily at your own fireside, when he was quite a youth. It is now at this sorrowful moment, more than ever, that I feel conscious of the good influence his society exerted on my own character. That fine nature of his—combining as it did, in such finely mixed proportions, all the love and tenderness of a woman, with the courage and generosity of a true man—could not but exercise a purifying influence on all with whom he came in contact. For my own part, I think it but just to say (not only because it will be agreeable to your feelings, but because it is true), that I have never known a young man whom I could so thoroughly love and admire as I did James. If these are my feelings about him, what must be those of his bereaved wife?—his mother, to whom he was so tenderly attached?—of his brothers and sisters and yourself? Still, my dear friend, this consolation is well fitted to cheer us all—at any rate, it cheers me—the certainty that the departed has but left earth to enter heaven. Of this I have

no more doubt than I have that this is noon-day, and that the rays of the glorious sun are now streaming through my room window. Let us not, therefore, sorrow as those who have no hope. Tell the young widow, his mother, and all your family, how deeply and sincerely I share their sorrow, and hope to be able to pay you a short visit some day soon.— I am, in haste, yours very truly,

W— —

Having consigned to the narrow house the mortal remains of my first-born, I felt somewhat indisposed to leave my home in the midst of that dense gloom into which, in the providence of God, it had been brought; but remembering that when a dear friend sat by the death-bed of my beloved daughter weeping, she said to him, "Now, do not weep for me: my work is done; yours is not. Trust in the Lord, and go and do it, and we will soon meet again in a better world." I felt as if necessity were laid upon me to prosecute what of my work remained. The double bereavement with which we had been visited caused that work to appear in my estimation more solemn and important than ever it had previously done. Accordingly, on the 17th of July, having committed my sorrowing wife and children to the care of Him who is ever a present help in time of need, I left home once more to prosecute my duties. May God give me grace so to live and act that at last I shall be able to say, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith." Very fortunately I had been appointed to labour for a week in Lochee, where I had the company of Mr. M'Lean, who ~~had~~ ^{previously} passed through similar trials to my ~~own~~ ^{and}, and who, therefore, was capable of sympathiz-

ing with me and my family in our distress, and most heartily did so. After bidding farewell to Lochee, I visited all the Societies in the Angus and Mearns district, and everywhere met with an amount of sympathy which I felt in my circumstances to be invaluable.

On the 19th of August I finished my fifteenth campaign, under the auspices of the Scottish Temperance League, at Bannockburn. Oh that I could have added, that the victory gained over our country's greatest enemy was as complete as on that day when Bruce fought and triumphed on the same battle-field! But, alas! that is what I cannot do. That such a victory over customs so degrading to man and dishonouring to God will be recorded, I have no doubt; but before then there will be many hard battles to fight. In the meantime, I lay down my pen, but should anything occur between this and the time that the above is printed, worthy of notice, I shall put it upon record.

Since writing the above, a great variety of incidents have been noted in my Journal, from which I select the following:—

“Mr. Easton,” said a man to me one evening, “I have been an abstainer for fifteen years; and before I joined, you must understand, I was very much addicted to drinking. Well, four or five years after I became an abstainer it so happened that my house was very near that of a publican, to whom, not much to my credit, and greatly to the injury of my family, I had, in my drinking days, been an excellent customer. One evening, when standing at my own door, that ab-

lican at the same time standing in his, the latter gave me a signal to go and speak with him. I did so. After passing a few common remarks about the weather and so on, he took a shilling from his pocket, and, holding it out to me, said, 'There, man, take this, and, go and get yoursel' a dram.'—'Na, na,' said I, 'that sort o' wark 'll no dae for me noo. I was lang eneuch under drink's tyranny: I'm a free man noo.'—'Ha, you and your teetotal nonsense,' said he, 'what has ever it done for you? you're neither better like nor stronger, I'm very sure.'—'Well,' I replied, 'whether I'm better like or not, I am not disposed to say, but I'm very certain that my strength is greatly increased.'—'And how can you prove that?' he asked.—'Because,' said I, 'when I was a customer of yours, I could not carry sixpence; and now (taking thirty shillings of silver from my pocket) I can carry *that* with great ease.' He slunk away as if his nose had been bleeding, and never again meddled with me." Would that every one who becomes an abstainer gave a similar reply to the tempter! It is all that is necessary to gain the victory, and put him to flight.

"I've been an abstainer for more than twenty years," said another man. "My father was a maltster, and sent me, when I was a lad of sixteen, to a spirit-dealer in Greenock, who kept both a wholesale and retail shop. I was in the wholesale shop five days of the week, but on the Saturdays had to attend at the retail one, Saturday being the great slaughter-day of the week. During the day, Tom, who had been a flunky in his younger days, and who superintended

the retail business, served what customers came in ; and I was engaged cleaning the brass and getting all in readiness for the slaughter of the evening,—for I can call it nothing else ;—at all events it was a thorough fleecing of the sheep. There were a great many apartments in the house, and a back-door that opened into a court. So soon as six o'clock came, our customers, consisting both of men and women, began to pour in upon us ; and Tom might have been heard calling,—‘Mac, show these gentlemen into number four ; Mac, show these ladies, with their children, into number six,’ and so on. Matters would go on pretty pleasantly for awhile, until the drink began to work, and then the fighting and quarrelling commenced. Now Tom might have been heard calling most bitterly,—‘Mac, turn these blackguards out at the back door.’ And out we shoved them as fast as possible, not caring what became of them, so that we got them outside. So soon as we had done all we could to assist men and women on their way to the devil, we shut shop ; and I went home to my master’s, and had a glorious supper, after which we had family worship. The whole affair appeared to me so horrible that I left it in perfect disgust, and became an abstainer ; and the longer I live I am the more convinced that I did *right*.”

There are hundreds who at one time were drink-victims who can testify that abstinence was to them, under God, a stepping-stone to a new heart and a higher life ; while others belonging to the same class have been led, under the influence of that higher life, to become abstainers. With one of the latter I lately

spent a few nights, and felt deeply interested in the story of his life, which, unsolicited, he briefly recapitulated in my hearing, and which I give as nearly as possible in his own words.

“Mr. Easton, I am a stranger to you, but not you to me. I’ve known you for many years; and in like manner I know all the speakers on Temperance in Edinburgh. I lived many years there, and although a complete victim to drink, I attended the meetings very regularly. Eight times I took the pledge, and as often did I break it. I had a strong desire to be free, but somehow or other the temptation to drink was too strong for me. Well, sir, one evening I was going down the High Street quite sober, for my money was done, and right glad I would have been had any person offered me a gill; but none such turned up. In these circumstances, I thought I should turn in to one of the meetings of the Carrubber’s Close Mission, and while there, I was brought under such influences as I had never previously felt. After this I never again entered a public-house but once, and then at the pressing solicitation of some old comrades. When in, however, I had no peace. Something told me I was doing wrong. The drink that had been called for, I paid, and rose and left without tasting. Soon after this I removed from Edinburgh, and came to this place, and I concluded that, whatever others might be able to do, if I desired to live the life of a Christian, there was no safety for me but to let drink alone. So again I took the pledge, and, by God’s good hand upon me, have kept it ever since. But what grieves me *now* most of all is, that

my children (some of whom are far up in their *teens*, and who remember well what a life I had previously led, and the amount of suffering they then endured), are very careless; and when I speak to them concerning the interests of their soul, although they do not say anything, I can easily see that the impression upon their mind is, that my professions are a *sham*. This is my present sorrow: but I do trust, God helping me, I shall live in such a manner as to make a very different impression upon their minds."

Where, I should like to know, is there an argument that ought to be felt pressing home upon the conscience of every Christian father and mother with greater power than when, pointing them to such cases as the above, we ask them, for their children's sakes, never to use or countenance the use of that accursed drink?

There are two other incidents which I intended to have referred to, but which at the proper time were overlooked, and with these I close.

In 1863, Mr. W. Johnston, now the secretary of the League, and I spent several weeks in Fifeshire, labouring under the auspices of that large-hearted friend of our cause, Mr. Macfie of Kilmux. Our meetings were in general large, and followed by a gratifying amount of success. Our *modus operandi* was to settle down for a number of days in a central town, and from thence make aggression on the surrounding towns and villages. When in the village of C — we had a blank night, and I felt strongly inclined to have a night's rest; but my yoke-fellow was deter-

mined to have a meeting, whatever amount of travel it might involve. Accordingly, much against my inclination, he led me away to a straggling village five or six miles distant. I was not in the least disappointed to learn, on reaching the village, that no meeting could be got that evening. After enjoying a hearty tea, and spending a pleasant social hour with a family from whom both of us had formerly received much kindness, we retraced our steps. My friend, however, determined not to be deprived of the luxury of a meeting even for a single night, led me away to the neighbourhood of some coal pits. I was much struck with his determination not to be foiled in his endeavour to do some service in the good work, however small, ere we returned to our lodgings.

At length a very suitable party turned up, in the shape of fifteen or twenty colliers sitting by the roadside. This was too good an opportunity to be let slip, and, without any ceremony, Mr. Johnston at once informed them that we were going about advising people to cease drinking, and if they had no objection we would address them for a little upon that subject! Not waiting their answer, he at once went into his subject with hearty goodwill. In a very short time a number of "volunteers" came up on their way to *drill*, and their officer, who was friendly to our cause, gave orders that they should halt and hear what we had to say. We had therefore not only a large, but an attentive meeting, and had every reason to believe that if nothing else was accomplished, prejudices against our cause were shaken, if not wholly destroyed. For this

result, all credit is due to the dogged perseverance of my companion, who in the evening retired to rest firmer in the faith than ever, that if a man seeks to do good, opportunities will be afforded him.

A few nights after, when in the village of L —, it was arranged that we should visit a small colliery clachan, where such a thing as a temperance meeting had never been held. The weather was remarkably fine, and the meeting was to be in the open air. As the place to be visited was very small, and as I had not seen my family for some time, I proposed to my companion that I should go home and spend the night with my family, and that he should take the meeting at the colliery himself. He insisted that I was expected at the meeting, and that I must keep faith with the public. The idea of going home was abandoned, and after tea we started for the place of meeting. I was in a very *humdrum* state, for, to tell the truth, I considered it nothing short of downright persecution to prevent my going home to see my family, and to trail me a couple of miles up among the hills to a place where one could have done the work just as well as two. You may therefore guess that I was in no great humour for speaking. Small as the clachan was, there was a public-house. On reaching the place, we learned that a dancing-master had arrived an hour or two before us with his *fiddle*, and had led away almost the entire population to have a night's dancing in a wood about a mile off. If I was in bad humour before, I was ten times worse now, and said to the few friends who were with us, that there was no use attempting a meeting.

While I was hanging my harp upon the willows, Johnston called to a woman to get him a chair, and he should soon get a meeting. Having got the chair, he mounted, and set to work with as much gusto as if he been addressing an audience of hundreds. The sound of his voice soon aroused such of the natives as were not carried off by the fiddle and the dancing-master. At first the audience kept at a very respectable distance, but gradually drew nearer, until there might be somewhere about 30, young and old, within the sound of his voice. Right before him, on the grass, sat an old woman of about threescore years and ten. She had evidently a craze, and was very demonstrative in her manner. She sat near him, and watched intently every word and gesture, and, as the late Mr. Scott of Leslie was in the habit of saying, he certainly did speak *audibly*. When he said anything that pleased her, she shouted her approval; and when she was displeased, she dissented most vehemently. He had not proceeded very far with his address when a young man came up, riding on a horse, and stood right between him and his audience. The scene at this point was so ludicrous that, had it been possible to get a correct photograph, it would have been a most amusing picture.

But nothing could turn my friend aside from his purpose. Taking the horse that now formed one of the congregation for his text, he delivered an excellent discourse, pointing to the horse as an excellent specimen of a teetotaler. Most gladly would I have remained silent on the occasion, and that he knew

right well; but this very knowledge made him all the more determined that I should speak. Accordingly he finished by telling his scattered audience that his friend Easton would now address them. With no little reluctance I mounted the chair, and commenced to speak, at the very lowest tone I could pitch my voice, thinking thereby to bring the people nearer. I had not spoken many minutes when the "*auld wifie*," sitting ten yards distant on the top of a "*fail dyke*," screamed out, at the highest pitch of her voice, "Speak oot, man! speak oot! I say, speak oot, ye great big lazy lump! Man, the little ane can make far mair noise than you." Very shortly after receiving such a left-handed compliment, I brought my address to a conclusion, and took farewell of the scattered meeting with much less reluctance than I now take it of my readers.

APPENDIX

A.

EFFECTS OF DRINK.

HAVING in the text noticed a few of those things which more especially surprised me when I entered upon, and while I prosecuted, the work of a temperance missionary, it may not be out of place here to state briefly the reasons why alcoholic drink, beyond everything with which we are acquainted, demoralizes men and women, and renders them tenfold more the children of the devil, thereby earning for itself the character of being one of the greatest barriers in the way of the Gospel Missionary.

Let it be remembered that one peculiar effect of alcoholic drink is to create an appetite for itself, while the more that appetite is gratified with what created it, the more arbitrary do its demands become; that alcohol is a poison which of all others, opium not excepted, has the greatest affinity for the brain; that the brain is the organ through which mind acts; and that a sound mind depends upon a healthy, sound brain.

It is a well-known fact that other organs may be in an abnormal condition and the mind remain uninjured, but whatever disturbs the healthy condition of the brain less or more injuriously affects the mind. Having stated the above facts, let us turn for a moment to the plan revealed to us by which God purposes to wean man from his unnatural rebellion, and secure his allegiance. To accomplish this, God does not deal with man as with a piece of inorganic matter that by some mishap had got out of its proper place in the universe. His moral character and government made it necessary that he should deal with man after a very different manner. Man had sin-

ned. The fiat of the Almighty had gone forth—"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Man must die or a substitute be found. God in his mercy and grace provided one in the person of his well-beloved Son, and now he condescends to reason the matter with man, treating him as a rational, intelligent, accountable being. "Come now, saith the Lord, let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool, though they be red as crimson, they shall be white as snow. As if he had said, "Come *now*, let you the rebel, and I your rightful King, reason the matter together, and I will show you that, notwithstanding all your rebellion against my righteous government, there is no reason, except your own unbelief, why you should die. The blood of Jesus Christ, my Son, cleanseth from all sin." God, in seeking to save man, draws him with the cords of love, the bands of a man. Now, if it be admitted that the plan God acts upon in order to man's salvation has been fairly and honestly, although very briefly stated, then it must be conceded, in the next place, that there exists the most powerful reasons why he should on all occasions be kept in the best possible condition for reasoning correctly; and, if so, can any one gainsay the great propriety of his abstaining from that material which of all others goes most directly to injure that organ upon the healthy condition of which the soundness of his mind so much depends? It is not when man's reason is disturbed, no matter from what cause, that he is considered in the most favourable condition for receiving saving impressions. It is not when he is labouring under a brain fever, or reduced to the condition of a maniac, that we consider it a proper time to urge upon him the great salvation. In such circumstances our common-sense would suggest the physician rather than the minister; while in such cases as that of the woman to whom reference has been made in the text, the policeman is to be preferred to either.

It will be admitted by every candid man, that even in the ordinary transactions of life, whether that be to manage a steam-ship, or an iron horse, or any other occupation, it is

most desirable that man should have all his senses about him, so that as far as possible he may be capable of meeting every emergency. How much more is this necessary when he is required every day to transact business with God for eternity! Of all the important reasons, this is by far the most important why man on all occasions should be in the undisturbed possession of all the faculties of his soul. But how can we expect this to be the case in every instance, and on all occasions, so long as the great majority of those who profess to be working for God's glory in the salvation of their fellows lend their influence to the support of a heathenish practice of drinking liquids which contain less or more of that particular poison which so injuriously affects the organ through which mind acts? So long as they do this, why express surprise that so many thousands of their countrymen, in attempting to imitate them in drinking, have been led on till the cords of their soul are not only impaired, but in many instances are all but destroyed; or, in other words, till all that is within them upon which God's gracious Spirit acts in turning men from sin to God is all but destroyed? In reference to this matter, the great majority of Christian people act very much as a man who should scatter firebrands in a crowd, and then, expressing surprise that so few remained to hear him preach, engage men at sixpence an hour to try and bring the runaways back. Is this not very like the way in which the great bulk of Christians, backed out by the large majority of ministers, act? If they do not throw firebrands among the people, they keep up the circulation of the fire-water among them, and, consequently, thousands get so scorched, that their hopes, fears, and affections are so destroyed that they neither fear God nor regard man. Having done thus, they employ men called Home Missionaries to go and try how many of the drink-charred brands they can pluck from the burning, which they themselves assisted to kindle. And when these plodding, painstaking missionaries exclaim with the prophet,—“Who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?—We have

spent our strength for nought, and in vain,"—Mission Boards express surprise that it should be so, and confess themselves unable to account for it, one and all of them too often forgetting that if men are to be won to God, it is needful to abstain from former practices, as well as to acquire new modes of action, and that it is right and proper that those who thus plead for God should not by any means set an example to follow which would either be a hindrance to the sinner or a stumbling-block to the inquirer. Scattering firebrands in the crowd is a means not more certain to prevent the Gospel being listened to, than keeping up the circulation of the "fire-water" at ordination dinners and elsewhere. Abstinence from both practices is equally required. None need be afraid to follow Paul, who was not only prepared to do certain things, but to abstain from doing certain others, so that the weakest might not be offended, and so that he might win souls to God. there is nothing more distinctly taught in the Bible than the necessity of the adaptation of means to ends. A very striking example of this occurred when a few of the disciples of our Lord came in contact with a young man possessed by a demon, whose deliverance they sought with all earnestness, but unsuccessfully. Anxious to know the reason of their failure, they inquired of their master—"Why could we not cast him out?" Mark the reply—"This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." As if our Lord had said—"You have shown great sympathy for the young man, and in using means for his deliverance you have been sincere; but you have failed to gain the end you desired, and the reason of your failure is, you have not used the special means necessary to gain the end you had in view,—'This kind goeth out by no other means than those of prayer and fasting.'" It is evident that the general principle here taught is that special means must be used to gain special ends. If so, then let all non-abstainers ponder well the question, whether, while they are praying that the demon drunkenness may be cast out of this, that, or the other man, and out of the world, they are using the special means necessary to that end, so long as they are setting the example of

admitting into their own system the demon drink. It is no solitary case, that of a father wrestling with God that the demon drunkenness might be cast out of his son, and he continuing to set his son the example of fraternizing with the demon drink. Has such a parent any good reason to expect that his prayer will be answered if his son attempt to imitate his example? None whatever. It is only when prayer, in conjunction with abstinence from drink, is practised by himself, that he has any right to hope for success. It would be too much to assert that there never has been a drunkard reformed who did not abstain from drink; but I have never known or heard of one, though inquiry has been made at parties in every part of Scotland. Having occasion to call upon a minister who had no sympathy with abstinence, when he told me, right out, that he considered I was advocating a principle for which there was no authority in the Bible, I said if he could convince me of that I would resign my office, and go back to the railway; but added—"Surely you will admit that there is great need for something being done to arrest the drunkenness that prevails?"—"Yes," he said; "but yours is not the plan."—"Well, what plan would you recommend?" I asked; "because we hold ourselves at perfect liberty to adopt any other, if it can be shown to be a better."—"Thoroughly purge the churches of drunkards," he said. "Probably," I said, "they required that;" and then ventured to ask if that was the plan he had been trying. "Yes, during the last twelve years," he said, "I have put out of my church six men for the sin of drunkenness."—"Well, sir, it is very sad that you have had such work to do; but in doing it no doubt you did your duty: but how many during that time have you by your plan rescued from drunkenness, and brought into the Church, instead of putting them out?"—"Well," he said, "I do not know that I can name any particular one; but you know the 'wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.'"—"Well, sir, I am not an educated man, nor very much of a theologian, and had I been both, very

likely I could not have said from whence the wind comes or whither it goes; but without being either, I can tell when it blows over a tree, and from the way the tree lies it is not very difficult to say from what quarter the wind came when the tree was blown over. Granted that it is with the Spirit as with the wind, that you cannot tell from whence it cometh or whither it goeth, surely you might be able to tell if during these twelve years it has made you instrumental in rescuing a drunkard; because, assuredly, there is not a greater difference between a tree standing perpendicularly and one lying horizontally than there is between Philip drunk and Philip sober. Now, by our plan, none were ever expelled from the Church, while a great many have by it been retained in it. And, moreover, by our plan we have rescued many a drunkard whom the Church had cast out, and many who never had any connection with her, and have brought them up, clothed, and in their right mind, to the feast of Jesus." With many such I have knelt at the family altar, and heard them thank God that their attention had ever been turned to the temperance movement. With an almost endless array of such facts in its favour, I was not, and am less so now than ever, disposed to accept the assertion referred to, that a plan which God has been pleased so extensively to bless in doing good has no authority or sanction in the Bible. What! no authority in the Bible for teaching abstinence from intoxicating drink? Surely it was not without a purpose that God inspired men of old to warn us, both by example and solemn admonition, against it. Not in vain that he inspired his servant Solomon to style it a mocker and deceiver, and those whom it deceives as not wise. Not without an object that men inspired by the Spirit of God have symbolized its properties by the serpent's bite, the adder's sting, the poison of dragons, and venom of asps. What can be the purport of all this, if not to teach us not to "look upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright;" or, in modern phraseology, to teach us abstinence from alcoholic drink. Rest assured, the dietetic and social use of that against which we are so warned, and whose

character is so plainly stated in the Bible, is a practice that cannot but be inimical to the growth of grace in the soul, and to the propagation of the Gospel.

There cannot be a doubt that every, even the slightest, action of alcohol upon the brain produces in the soul a deflection the wrong way. True, this may not always be appreciable, but it is not the less real. Every observing man will admit that it requires but a very small quantity of alcoholic drink to destroy, for the time being, real devotional feeling in the soul. Where is the man who could say with a good conscience that, after spending some time in the public-house, or after taking drink, he felt in as proper a condition for officiating at the family altar as he should have done had he never tasted? Many such altars have strange fire laid upon them, and many more remain without a sacrifice; just because the officiating priest has been, if not at the altar of Baal, at that of Bacchus; and, when there, has subjected his brain to the action of that deceptive drug, dealt out by the high priests of the jolly god, in return for the copper offerings of his worshippers. But again, the action of drink upon the brain not only destroys, for the time being, devotional feeling, thereby unfitting even good men for acceptable worship, but it is equally well adapted to efface good impressions made upon the minds of the unconverted. What is the experience of those who have had ample opportunities of judging of its effects in this direction? That it is in vain to hope for any permanently satisfactory results, if those under conviction of sin permit their brain to be acted upon by alcohol. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred all such convictions, when not better entertained, pass away like the baseless fabric of a vision. Here is an illustration, furnished by the party concerned. At the close of one of my meetings, at which this matter had been alluded to, a young man accompanied me to my lodgings, and spoke as follows—"Some four or five months ago I was brought under deep conviction of sin; in these circumstances two companions called, and we all went out to walk; and having to pass a wayside public-house, they would call to have some drink. I objected,

but they prevailed. We had drink. Very soon all my convictions of sin were gone, and that night I went home to my widowed mother singing a bacchanalian song."

Dr. Julius Wood, in commending to the Free Church Assembly, 1865, its *Report on Religion and Morals*, referred to the fact that not a few of those who had been hopefully brought under the influence of religion, during the revival movement, having been formerly addicted to the use of strong drink, had relapsed into the same vice. He thought this was a caution to men how they indulged in the use of drink. "*There was a use of it,*" he said, "*which fell far short of actual intoxication, which yet was greatly opposed to spiritual religion.*" The last twenty-one words of the extract now made from Dr. Wood's speech are worthy of being engraved with an iron pen upon the door-posts of every church, because of their truthfulness, and because of the great lesson which they teach. How strange, then, that any man who is cognizant of their truthfulness, and who prays that God would pour out his Spirit, that sinners may be convicted, should continue to lend the whole weight of his influence to the support of a practice that so extensively mars and obliterates the first motions of the gracious Spirit in the hearts and consciences of thousands!

But again. Not only does the action of alcohol upon the brain do all that has been indicated, but from its long continued use, in hundreds of cases, the faculties of the soul get so thoroughly impaired, that little or no hope can be entertained of impressing them for good. As to the number of instances where its effect upon the brain dethrones reason altogether, let the statistics of our Lunatic Asylums testify.

Many illustrations could I give from my own experience, how drink, when it had not gone the length of dethroning reason altogether, had nevertheless so destroyed the faculties of the soul that little hope could be entertained of doing the parties any spiritual good; but I prefer giving one from a tract written by Doctor Mudge, and published by Mr. Tweedie, London. I quote from memory:—"A doctor was called to visit an old gentleman, whom he found, on entering

his room, sitting on an easy chair. Having felt his pulse, &c., he said,—‘Now that you have sent for me, do you wish that I should be honest with you?’—‘Certainly,’ replied the gentleman. ‘Well, then,’ the doctor went on to say, ‘I have little doubt but you will be prepared to say that no person ever saw you what is called drunk, nevertheless you know that for many years you have been in the daily habit of drinking alcoholic drink, and frequently very freely. And if you wish to give me a fair chance of restoring you to comparative health, you must quit taking drink.’ The gentleman drew himself up in his chair, and tartly replied,—‘Drink never did me harm.’—‘Drink never did you harm!’ said the doctor: ‘why, you are labouring under a complication of diseases, brought on by its long-continued action upon the various organs of your body.’ Let the doctor say what he liked, the only reply he received from the old man was, ‘Drink never did me harm.’ The doctor prescribed, and left the house, and on his way met a missionary, whom he requested to call upon the old man, and talk with him about the concerns of his soul. Some time after, the doctor again met the missionary, and asked how he was getting on with his patient. ‘Not well,’ he replied: the truth is, doctor, it’s of no use going near him: when I speak to him of heaven, it does not cheer him; when I speak to him of hell, it does not fear him; when I refer to the great salvation, it has no effect. You may either believe it or not, but the truth is, it is of no use going near him,—*the man cannot think.*” And why was it the man could not think? Just because he had been so long and severely acted upon by that subtle drug, that the faculties of his mind were all but destroyed, and his conscience seared; so that it might be said, in the emphatic language of Scripture, he was “twice dead, plucked up by the root.” His hopes were so beclouded, that when the glories of the new Jerusalem were spoken of in his hearing, it threw no gleam of light over them. His fears were so dormant, that when the terrors of the Lord were recapitulated in his hearing, they awoke them not to activity. The affections of his soul were so scorched and destroyed, that

when the story of love as exhibited on Calvary's summit was presented to him, it produced no sensation there. In short, whether the reader may believe it or not, the man's brain had been so injured, that the soul had lost almost all its elasticity, and had become a poor shrivelled thing, hence the emphatic saying of the missionary,—“It is of no use going near him, the man cannot think.” The above is not an exaggerated picture of what I have frequently met with myself; and there are hundreds more who are every year fast descending from among all classes to the same hopeless condition. Talk about preaching the Gospel to such! Unless you can get them away from drink, or take the drink away from them, you may as well preach to the clods of the valley. Hence, in the summer of 1864, it was frankly admitted by the Mission Board of one of our principal towns, that unless something could be done to arrest drunkenness, the missionaries could find little or no reception for the Gospel. The truth is, give the devil the drink-system, with a fair number of professedly Christian people to conduct it, and he will not care what number of missionaries, and Sabbath school teachers, and ministers the Church employs. With such an agency, he can say with a fiendish grin,—“Hitherto shall ye come, and no farther.” When will the day come that *Mission Boards*, and every other *Board* whose professed desires are to see the demon drunkenness cast out, cease to admit the demon drink?

B.

DANGER OF SLIGHTING CONVICTION.

PERHAPS there is nothing better fitted to wither up religion in the soul, and cause it to be a thing of stunted growth, than to act in opposition to honest, enlightened conviction. The evils resulting from such a practice are not confined within the narrow circle of the individual. The practice sets in

motion waves of evil, which will continue to move on and on, through all time, into the ocean of eternity. Many illustrations of this, from history, will at once be suggested to the mind of the reader; and many might be furnished from modern times, arising out of the fact that so many otherwise good people act against their convictions in reference to the Temperance movement. Let one, out of hundreds that the writer could give, suffice. A reformed drunkard of eight or nine years' standing had a child baptized. It so happened that, on the evening of the day on which the ceremony had been performed, a person who had been absent from the locality for twenty years returned, and called upon the father of the child, with whom in early life he had been well acquainted. In the course of conversation the stranger remarked, in a jocular manner, that he felt surprised that his friend on such a joyous occasion had not a glass of anything with which to treat an old friend. The reformed drunkard replied—"Well, there has much come and gone since you went away. I must be honest to tell you that in the course of a few years after you left this place I became a confirmed drunkard, and was reduced to misery. Nearly nine years ago a Temperance society was organized in this town, and I was persuaded to become a member, and since then there never has been a drop of drink in our house. I have been restored to comparative comfort, and to my former status in the Church, and, along with all my family, think it best that drink should not be even kept in our house."—"Oh, well," said the stranger, "I have certainly no fault to find with the Temperance cause. There can be no doubt but it has done a vast deal of good. If I were disposed to find fault at all, it would be with some of its friends, who, like yourself, make other people, whether they choose or not, act as they themselves do. I have a conviction, whether right or wrong, matters not to you, that after the walk I have had to-day, I should be the better of a single glass." To accommodate his friend, the reformed drunkard allowed a very small quantity to be brought. The two sat down together and talked of bygone days, only as friends can talk who have been

long separated, and the result was, that before the stranger left the house the poor man was persuaded just to taste with him. In the course of a few weeks he died, and his death was caused by drinking. Better far that a man should borrow a bag, and beg to the day of his death, than give countenance to a system by means of which so many men, like the one referred to, are made to stumble and fall, to be snared and taken. Reader, as an honest man, say,—Was it a sin, or was it not, for the stranger to act as he did? If you reply in the affirmative, as I anticipate you will, then how do you know how many your *one* glass may have caused to stumble in the same manner. In the month of February, 1864, I heard of a drunkard who had become an abstainer, and kept his pledge for nearly a year. He had occasion to attend a feeing market, and during the day he managed to refuse every invitation to go into the public-house until about six o'clock in the evening, when he saw a man going into one, who had taken a very active part in the revival movement. He then yielded, went in, and was carted home drunk to his family.

It is unworthy of a Christian man to cut a small twig from this great Upas tree—the drink-system—and then endeavour to prove that there is no sin in sticking it in his hat. He acts decidedly more becoming a patriot and a Christian, who looks upon the whole system as a monstrous iniquity, from beginning to end, and seeks its entire overthrow.

C.

ESTHER AND KING AHASUERUS.

WE are informed that after King Ahasuerus had exalted one Haman to be Prime Minister in his extensive kingdom, he issued a command, that all the servants in the royal palace were to bow down and do reverence to him,—reverence that amounted all but, if not altogether, to idolatry. Among all

the servants in the palace there was only one nonconformist. The nonconformists, as a class, have very frequently in the history of the world been in the minority, and in the minority they decidedly were on the occasion referred to. Mordecai, one of the children of the captivity, who sat at the king's gate, would upon no account conform to the law of the king. As soon as Haman was made aware of this, he resolved to be revenged upon him. To accomplish this he embraced the first opportunity grossly to misrepresent the Jews to the king, and succeeded in persuading him to issue a decree, that on a given day the Jews, young and old, should be put to death. So soon as Mordecai became acquainted with this diabolical plot, he set to work wisely and energetically (as every right-hearted man would have done) to save his own life and that of his kindred. His first thought was to get the ear of Queen Esther, and inform her of the whole plot, and request her without delay—for there was no time to be lost—to go into the inner court into the presence of the king, and there use all her influence, so that, if possible, the decree that had been already circulated throughout all the provinces might be counteracted, and the Jews saved from destruction. Queen Esther, however, like a good many in our own day, begged to be excused from undertaking this rather dangerous commission. In her reply to Mordecai she reminded him of a law that whosoever should dare to go into the king's presence, unless when called, was there and then to be put to death. She added that she had not been called into the king's presence for the last thirty days. These things considered, she thought herself quite justified in begging to be excused from undertaking the work.

Mordecai was not to be turned aside from his purpose by any such excuses, and replied,—“Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews; for if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the

kingdom for such a time as this?" As if Mordecai had said,—"I am well aware of the law to which you refer; but the case is a desperate one. And remember that by refusing to comply with my request, so far from securing your own personal safety, you will bring destruction upon yourself and upon your father's house. Moreover, let me tell you, Queen though you are, that your non-interference will not prevent God from fulfilling all his purposes in reference to the Jews. If you refuse to co-operate with him, God will find his workers elsewhere. But if you would only reflect upon the way by which God has hitherto led you, and the position in which he hath now placed you, the idea could not but be suggested to your mind that he hath raised thee from thy previous humble condition, and placed thee upon the throne of Persia for this very purpose, that at such a time as this you should interfere, and be his honoured instrument in delivering his people out of the hands of this wicked man."

Such was the meaning of the message of Mordecai to Queen Esther. Let us see, then, what lessons are deducible from it.

In the first place, while we are taught that God is a God who hideth himself, and that in his providential *dealings* with his people his ways are often to them dark and mysterious, and even at times quite incomprehensible, we learn from the message that the leadings of God's providence, taken in connection with his Word, *may* sometimes be so plain, and therefore so easily understood, that there can be no doubt regarding the work to be done, and the workers whose special duty it is to undertake it. "Who knoweth," said Mordecai to Esther,— "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"—"Everything conspires," as if he had said, "to convince me that for such a time as this God hath raised thee from being a captive to be a Queen, that thou mightest interfere, and be the honoured instrument of delivering his people."

There can be little doubt that Mordecai felt not a little surprised when he beheld a poor despised captive in a foreign land, such as Esther had been, raised to a position at once the

most conspicuous and most honourable that any woman in Persia could occupy; and at the time he would not understand the grand purpose God had in view in so exalting her. This exaltation would doubtless be singularly mysterious; but as the panorama of God's providence passed, and as Mordecai continued to read the lessons there taught, more especially after he had read the edict suggested by the wicked Haman, he would, putting all these lessons together, and reading them in the light of the promises God had made to the Fathers in reference to the Jewish people, begin to discover the grand design God had in view in exalting Esther. He saw in her exaltation God preparing a way of escape for the Jews out of the hands of Haman.

It is very evident from this message that Mordecai believed that God had a grand purpose in view in reference to the Jewish people, and that therefore he would interfere in one way or another, and deliver them out of the hand of Haman; and his belief of this was no doubt based upon the promises God had given in reference to the Jews. But while convinced of this, on the one hand, he was as thoroughly convinced, on the other, that God not only graciously condescends to afford man an opportunity of becoming, but commands him to become, a co-worker with him in carrying out his eternal purposes. Mordecai was one of those common-sense men who believe that God does not effect by miracle what human instrumentality can accomplish. The special work necessary to be done was, to get the law that had gone forth counteracted. Mordecai could not anticipate its repeal; for there was no altering of the laws of the Medes and Persians. The most he could expect to accomplish would be, to get it counteracted, and the Jews afforded an opportunity of defending themselves. This was the work to be done, in order that they might be delivered. But how was it to be accomplished? In no other way than by influencing the king. But who would undertake that? Who would be patriotic enough to take their life in their hand, and, in direct opposition to a law of the king, go in to his presence? Who would dare to

approach the royal despot, and petition him to counteract a law that only a short time before he had sent forth, sealed with his own royal signet, into all the provinces? Mordecai had no difficulty in deciding who of all others should undertake that work, and who of all others was most likely to succeed. The finger of God in providence pointed to Esther as specially called upon to undertake, and most likely to succeed in the work needed.

God has still a grand purpose in view—the conversion of the world to himself; and branching out from it, he has other purposes, subordinate, but at the same time conducive to that grand one. It is his declared will that every let, every hindrance or stumbling-block that lies in the way of that grand purpose being accomplished, shall be removed.

But as in the days of Mordecai, so in ours, God is still affording man an opportunity of being a co-worker with him in fulfilling his purposes. To every age of the world God has allotted special work, and committed its execution to special workers.

The work to be done in our day and country is very different from what was necessary in the days of Mordecai. But it could not appear to him more certain that, if the Jews were to be delivered, the work to be done was to get the decree that had been suggested by Haman counteracted, than it is perfectly evident that, if our country is to be delivered from the dire curse of drunkenness, it is equally necessary that the drink-system in which it originates, and out of which it arises, be not only counteracted, but entirely subverted and overturned. This appears to be the special work for the present time. Most heartily do we homologate the language of the late Rev. John Angel James:—"Almighty God could not bless this country more, short of converting every man and woman to the Gospel of his own Son, than by the entire destruction of the drink-system." With my whole heart I say, Amen. This is just as certainly the work of all others requiring to be accomplished in our country, as the destruction of the slave-system was lately that of the United States of America.

If the overturning of the drink-system among us be *the* work second only to that of directly converting souls to God, who are the parties whose special duty it is to undertake its accomplishment? I reply, that it could not be more evident to Mordecai that Esther was the party of all others specially called upon to undertake the work to which he urged her, than it is to my mind that Christians, individually and unitedly, are the parties who are emphatically called upon to undertake and accomplish the work to which I refer.

It is a mistake to suppose, when God lays his hand of grace upon a man and saves his soul, that that is the only end God has in view. No doubt, so far as the man is concerned, it is the most important of all ends; but God desires every man so saved to become an instrument for righteousness in his hand, that his work of delivering the world from sin may be carried forward to that glorious consummation when there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy. Surely, in rescuing and raising up so many captives of sin and Satan, and making them unto himself kings and priests, it is that, among other things, they may under him do battle against the master iniquity of the day and country in which they live. Is it unreasonable to suppose that God, in bringing his Church in this country out of many a trial, and permitting her to rest under her own vine and fig tree, free from all fear of persecuting edicts of despotic kings and designing courtiers, intended that, at such a time as this, she should exert the mighty power with which he has invested her, so that under him she may be the honoured instrument of delivering our country from a system more God-dishonouring, and far more destructive to the bodies and souls of men, than any edict ever issued and carried into effect by the greatest despot that ever filled an earthly throne? Most assuredly, such work would more become the various sections of the Church than much in which they engage.

Having thus referred to the work and the workers, let us now see what the result will be should the workers stand aloof, pleading this, that, and the other excuse for not inter-

fering. This will at once appear if we turn our attention to another lesson taught in this message of Mordecai, viz,—that respect to self, to the neglect of public duty, will not secure personal safety, but the reverse. Or, to put it in other words—"To ward off public suffering and sin is the duty of all; and the path of duty in this, as in every other matter, is the only path of safety." "Think not with thyself," said Mordecai to Esther, "that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews; for if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed." We know not what the destruction would have been to Esther and her father's house, had she persisted in refusing to perform the public duty to which she was so evidently called. But the principle of destruction here referred to we look upon as of universal applicability, always acting, though in various ways, upon individuals, churches, and nations, when in their respective spheres they stand aloof, and refuse to interfere to remove public sin and suffering.

If ever this principle has been seen acting out its tragedy upon a nation, because of duty neglected, it has been of late in the United States of America. How often, in bygone years, was that nation called upon, by men whose earnestness was not surpassed by Mordecai's, to go with heart and soul into the abolition movement, regardless of consequences, that so she might do her duty, and set the down-trodden slave free, and thus free herself from the righteous condemnation of Him who hath made of one blood all the nations that dwell on the earth! But, alas! alas! America, as a nation, not only begged, like Queen Esther, to be excused from undertaking any such work, but actually had the audacity to defend slavery—that sum of all villanies—as being a divine institution. How very appropriately might that nation have been addressed in the language of Mordecai to Esther, merely altering the phraseology to suit the circumstances,—“Think not that thou shalt escape more than any other nation: for if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance rise to the slave in a way thou art little anticipating, but

meanwhile much of thy power for doing good and getting good will be destroyed!" Continuing to lend a deaf ear to all the calls that were made to her in reference to this matter, America's day of terrible retribution came; and she has been driven, more by the stern laws of necessity than from a regard to justice, to do her duty in liberating her slaves.

There can be little doubt that the sighs and groans of four millions of slaves, and the inhumanity, immorality, and licentiousness of those who bought, and sold, and kept them in bondage, not only unrestrained by national authority, but under its sanction, has brought down upon that nation her recent bloody baptism: and it would be well were Britain to ponder and learn a lesson from what America has endured and is enduring; for the God that has been and is still chastising there, because of national sin, not only tolerated but encouraged, is the God that governs here; and we may rest assured that if, as a nation, we stand aloof and plead this, that, and the other excuse for not interfering and doing what we can to bring to a perpetual end that drink-system which, in many of its phases, is more debasing and God-dishonouring than the villanous system of slavery itself, sooner or later our day of retribution must come.

Let us not think that, because we sit as Queen among the nations, we shall escape more than others; for if we altogether hold our peace, and allow our national sin to prevail, rest assured our power for doing good and obtaining good will be destroyed, if the crown of glory be not taken from our head and given to another. We hope better things of our nation, though we thus speak. Perhaps there never was a time in our history when there was more vital Christianity, and greater effort made for the removal of what is wrong; and it is to be hoped that the day is not far off when Christians of every denomination will shake themselves free from all entanglement with the drink-system: then will our national deliverance from such a curse be at hand. Christians, in my opinion, are the only parties who can impart to the nation sufficient power to cast off the drink-incubus, and that power can only be

communicated by them when they prove that they are in possession of as much motive power as enables them to throw it first from their own shoulders.

There can be little doubt, we think, that had those who constitute the Church in America been as little implicated in the matter of slavery as Esther was in Haman's wicked plot, and had they gone as heartily into the abolition movement, in order to save men and women from slavery, as she went into the inner court to save her kindred from being murdered, America would not have had to undergo the bloody baptism she has. But that is what they did not do. Hence the destruction that has overtaken them and their fathers' house. If, then, those who constitute the Church in Britain would save themselves from injury, and the home of their fathers from untold suffering, the sooner they confer not with flesh and blood, but, clothed in their royal robes, go heart and soul into the Temperance movement, in order to save men and women from the slavery of the drink-system, the better it will be for themselves and our nation.

It is well that Christians should be reminded that this message of Mordecai to Esther is just as applicable to each of us *now* as it was to her *then*; so that we are quite justified in saying to each of our readers,—Think not that thou shalt escape, more than any of thy fellow-citizens, no matter what be thy rank or station; for if thou altogether holdest thy peace when matters of paramount public importance call aloud for thy energetic, immediate interference, escape from injury in one shape or another will be to thee impossible. "Curse ye Meroz," said the angel of the Lord, "Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof." And pray, why were they to be cursed? Just because they did the very thing that Esther was for doing, and, in all probability, but for Mordecai, would have done. They did nothing at all. They remained at home, and as many of them as had easy chairs no doubt occupied them. They did not leave these to go and fight against the Lord. No; they were, like a great many in the present day, far too decent, respectable, inoffensive people to do that; but as

little did they leave them to go and interfere and try to put down the enemies of the Lord; and because they did not interfere for that purpose, the angel gives commission to curse them bitterly,—and for what? Just for what the great majority of our Christian brethren are doing in reference to the murderous drink-system. How frequently does it happen, about a licensing time, when, as temperance reformers, we interfere to put down some low, dirty drunkenery, which in the locality is doing nothing but the devil's work, and when, in order to gain that end, we apply to our Christian brethren to assist us with their influence, that, in not a few instances, they ask, quite coolly, "What have we to do with the man? He is a very decent, obliging man. He sells a dram, that's true; and many a good man has done the same thing; and we see no reason why we should interfere to take the bread out of his mouth. If people will drink and go to destruction, they must just go. You temperance folk are a set of meddling sinners. What right have you to interfere with the man's business? Leave that to himself and his customers!" This is the very sin for which the inhabitants of Meroz were cursed, and the very sin which, had not Esther been kept from it, would have destroyed her and her father's house.

Christians are symbolized as the salt of the earth, and no doubt they are, and ever will be so. But they should remember that if corruption is to be prevented, the salt and the object to be preserved must be brought into contact. Or, to speak without a figure, Christians must do their duty. We have a very good illustration of the truth of this remark in the case of Esther. If she was to be the honoured instrument in the hand of God in delivering the Jews out of the hands of Haman, it was not sufficient for her to fast, pray, put on her royal robes, and sing a few of the songs of Zion. To do that was all right,—absolutely necessary in the first instance to be attended to; but having done so much, she is only equipped for the work which she must now begin. The first law of grace is self-denial, and it is to that that Esther is called. She must not only risk, but as good as

lose her life, that she may save it, and along with it the lives of her kindred. Clothed in royal robes, she must, in direct violation of law, go into the inner court into the presence of the king, and there, by her every look, action, and word, use all her influence, so that, if possible, he may be prevailed upon to give orders that the decree that had been sent forth be counteracted. In this way, and in this way only, could Esther become the honoured agent of delivering her people out of the hands of Haman.

Just as certain as the Jews were saved and Haman hanged, as the result of Esther going into the inner court, and there doing her duty, so would our country be saved from the curse of the drink-system, were all those who constitute the Church to go heart and soul into the Temperance movement, in direct opposition to all drinking customs. And until Christians do that, suffer they will, and suffer they must, not only as units in the nation, but as Christians, both individually and in their church capacity, in having their power for doing and getting good greatly destroyed.

"Though the mills of God grind slowly,
They grind exceeding small;
Though He stands and waits with patience,
With exactness grinds He all."

Nothing can be more certain than that, in exact proportion to the quantity of intoxicating drink consumed in any given locality, the inhabitants will have to suffer in one way or another. Let not the Church think, because she has an orthodox creed, and is, like Esther, greatly exalted, that she shall escape more than others; for if she altogether hold her peace at such a time as this, when a matter of such public importance as that of freeing our country from the unspeakable curse of the drink-system calls aloud for her energetic and immediate interference, escape from injury will be to her impossible.

Now, is it a fact, or is it not, that the Church (I use the word Church in a popular sense) has suffered from her connection with the drink-system and the attitude she has

hitherto assumed towards the Temperance enterprise? Most unhesitatingly we reply, she has and is suffering great injury. Because of her conduct hitherto in this matter her banners have been and are being constantly stained in the sight of an unconverted world; and by reason of that, the work assigned her is not only rendered more difficult, but her power to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes, whether at home or abroad, is weakened. The Rev. Hugh Goldie, a well-known servant of the Church, said some time ago, when in this country, that he and others did what they could to conceal from the poor heathen, emerging from heathenism, the conduct of Christians at home in reference to intoxicants. "We do," he said, "what we can to get these poor heathen, wishing to make a profession of Christianity, not only to abstain from taking, but not even to traffic in 'the fire-water,' because it is only when we can get them to attend to this that there is the smallest probability of them remaining firm to their professions." What is it, then, that weakens the hands of Mr. Goldie and others so? Let Mr. Goldie himself supply the answer. "Traders from Great Britain visit the coasts of heathendom, and tell the heathen the very thing that all along we have been trying to conceal from them—how that the good Christian people of Britain not only drink freely of the 'fire-water,' but traffic in it, and that the churches consider such conduct quite consistent." And what is the result? Why, as Mr. Goldie and others assure us, the poor heathen reason thus,—and who can blame them?—"If the good Christian people of Britain, who send us Bibles and missionaries to point the way to heaven and glory, do such things, why not we?" The consequence is, they betake themselves to the "fire-water," and not only sink back into the mire of heathenism, from which they were emerging, but perish, for ever perish, under the influence of that demon, drink, around which, up to the present time, the great majority of Christians who contribute to convert the heathen continue to throw a halo of sacredness. If we turn from the foreign to the home field, we are safe in saying that there is nothing that so

destroys the moral power of the Church as the position she has hitherto assumed towards the Temperance movement, and the countenance she has ever awarded to the drink-system. Only very recently a most trustworthy gentleman, belonging to one of our largest congregations in Edinburgh, told me, that after thousands of pounds had been spent in trying to carry the Gospel into a certain street, and though over and above the regular mission work for which the congregation paid, there were nearly twenty Christian volunteers who visited in that street every Sabbath, they could not lay their hands upon the head of even one, and say, "Here is one we have reformed." And why was this? It was full of whisky shops. The gentleman added—"I am really thinking of having an Abstinence society started in that street." Here we have a congregation spending a great amount of money and labour to no visible good purpose whatever: the drink-system is more than a match for them; and yet, year after year, they keep grinding on, never once thinking of going heart and soul into the Temperance movement in direct opposition to the whole drink-system. Not only, however, has the Church, by her conduct in this matter, lost moral but money power; and the latter is a power in its own 'place most important, and one that the Church must be possessed of to a greater extent than ever she has been, if the work assigned her is to be done. We were credibly informed by a brother of an eminent missionary, who some time ago left Glasgow with a company of fellow-labourers for the Samoa Islands, that the society which sent them out was saved the expense of a hundred and fifty pounds, compared with what it would have had to pay had they been, like a great many who were contributing to the mission, patronizers of the drink-system. But the whole company belonged to that small class of Christians who have gone with their whole heart into the Temperance movement in direct opposition to the drink-system; hence the saving of one hundred and fifty pounds in that single voyage from Glasgow to the Samoa Islands. Were the whole Church to imitate such parties in this matter, there can be very

little doubt that for every pound she has in her treasury now, with which to do the work of her Master, she should have twenty then.

In short, as the salt of the earth, the Church in our country has lost, and is losing much of her savour, because of her conduct hitherto in this matter; and had it not been that she has done her duty better in other matters than ever she has yet done in this, long ere now she should have lost her savour altogether, and been good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot. It is not by random I speak: I know what I say. In one sense the Church can never be destroyed. Most firmly do I believe that God will, in every age of the world, in one part or another, have His witnesses for the truth and against error; but it is a matter of history that once flourishing sections of the Church have destroyed themselves, some in one way and some in another. Where, for instance, are the seven churches of Asia? Blotted out of the map of churches. And why? Just because of error in doctrine and practice which they suffered, or of which they repented not. Think of the Church of Thyatira! She had many works that were commended, and the last more than the first; but she *suffered* that woman Jezebel, that called herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce the servants of the Lord to commit fornication, and eat things offered in sacrifice to idols; and because of that she was destroyed—or rather, in that way she destroyed herself. It is worthy of notice that she did not aid or abet Jezebel in her wicked works. All that she is charged with is, that she did not interfere to put her down; and because she did not, the candlestick was removed from her midst.

What non-interference in such a case did for the Church of Thyatira, it will do for any other. Let any section of the Church suffer that slave-system to which I have referred, or the drink-system, to obtain in the midst of and around it, and take no active, efficient means to put it down, rest assured its power for doing good and getting good will be greatly destroyed, and will ultimately peril its own existence.

Conversing one day with a godly old man, an office-bearer in one of our churches, he said—"I am very sorry to tell you, sir, that the congregation to which I belong has been so long, and has now got more than ever, from a combination of circumstances, so entangled with that vile drink-system, that our power to exercise discipline, so far as drunkenness is concerned, is all but destroyed." The truth is, there are many congregations which, from their entanglement with that system, are as much bound and weakened as were those in America from their entanglement with the slave-system. The turning of a straw indicates from what quarter the wind blows; and the following incident tells, with equal certainty, its story:—One Saturday evening, when sitting in one of my many lodgings, intending to give an address on the following Sabbath, there came in a respectable gentleman with whom I had a long conversation. When he was about to depart he said—"By the by, Mr. Easton, you are to be in our church to-morrow night, and there were several of our elders and managers thinking that it would be well to give you the hint not to come out hard on the traffic. We have some wealthy, respectable spirit-dealers, a brewer, and a distiller, in the church, and were you saying hard things on the traffic, they were afraid we might not get the church for our meeting again."—"I cannot help it," was my reply. "If I am not to be allowed to speak right-out what I believe to be the truth, they must just keep their kirk to themselves, and I shall go to the mountain-side, where the free breezes of heaven play, and where, without let or hindrance, I can speak out the truth in reference to that accursed traffic." Rest assured, until the churches of our country dare to be so faithful to the trust committed to them by the Captain of the Lord's host, as, with a willing hand to tear from the back of that iniquitous system, the cloak of hypocrisy with which it has been so long covered, and cause it to stand before the world in all its naked deformity, they never will and never can appear to an unconverted world—"fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Terrible as an army with banners! It is a lamentable fact

that many of them, from their entanglement with that drink-system, instead of being so to the more intellectual of our unconverted countrymen, are objects at which they point the finger of scorn, and at which, over the bacchanalian bowl, they laugh with glee.

Had the churches of our country thirty years ago responded to the cry then raised by many a Mordecai, and gone heart and soul into the Temperance movement, there can be little doubt that ere this they would have influenced the legislature to do for the nation what they had done for themselves. Not having done so, however, there can be as little doubt that their power for doing and getting good has thereby been greatly destroyed; and this is equally true of Christians as individuals. Conversing one night with an abstaining minister, he informed me that one of his brethren had called upon him and requested him to speak with one of his members who had fallen very much into the habit of hard drinking. I very naturally inquired why he did not go and speak with the man himself, and was told that, as he took a tumbler now and again, he thought that the abstainer would have more power to deal effectively with the man. That the power of those who have any connection with the drink-system is sadly weakened, when they come to deal with victims of drink, as compared with that of those who are abstainers, the following story will still further illustrate:—In 1860, when I was in a locality notorious for the manufacture of intoxicants, an elder of a church which included in its communion-roll a great number of those directly engaged in the traffic, called upon me and said—“Mr. Easton, I am going to inform you of what came under my own notice when acting in my official capacity as an elder. There was a woman, the wife of one of our deacons, who had fallen very much into intemperance. Her case was brought before the session, and two of us were appointed as a deputation to wait upon her. My neighbour was not an abstainer, but a very talkative sort of man; and when we called upon the woman he was the first to speak. He had not, however, proceeded far until she turned upon him, and told him

to hold his tongue, that both he and the minister drank more than she did. I then began to talk with her, and to remind her that I had been an abstainer for twenty years, and that I was not asking her to do what I had not done, and was still determined to do myself. 'Oh yes,' she said, 'you have a right to speak; but the like of him to come and talk to me about my drinking! Did you ever know such impudence?' When the session met to hear our report, I told everything, word for word, just as it occurred, and having done so, there was perfect silence. Not a member of court had a word to say."—"And why this silence?" I asked. "Because of their entanglement with the drink-system. In the work of dealing with the drunkard their consciences told them their hands were bound and their tongues tied." What a pity that any good man should remain in any way connected with a pernicious system, when, in consequence of doing so, he is unable in any direct way to assist in rescuing drunkards as they stagger on to their final doom, a curse meanwhile to themselves and all concerned.

Seeing, then, that the Church has not as yet gone into the Temperance movement, and prohibited the drink-system within her own borders, and cannot therefore influence the legislature to do that for the nation, should not Temperance reformers, as such, set about the work of securing a law to prohibit the whole traffic? I do not say that, in present circumstances, we can get no good by applications to that quarter. Much good has already been done by law in restricting the traffic, and much more may yet be done. Moreover, that is a kind of work in which all our Christian brethren, as advocates for the Sabbath and for the short-hour movement, can quite consistently assist us. But I have as little hope of being able to obtain anything approaching a Prohibitory Law, until an immense majority of the Christians of our country are right on the temperance question as Mordecai had of succeeding with Ahasuerus until he secured the good services of Esther. What, then, is to be done? Must we shut our mouths in silence, and sit down and fold our hands in indolence, and give way to despair? Perish, for ever perish

the thought! There is a more excellent way than that. When Mordecai was at first repulsed by Queen Esther, did that cause him to shut his mouth, and fold his hands, and sit down at the gate, and indulge in moping melancholy? Nay, verily not! It only roused him to greater energy and plainness of speech. Esther ultimately yielded to his request, and the Jews were not only delivered, but avenged upon their enemies.

What Mordecai did with Esther we must continue to do with our Christian brethren. We must send them message after message upon this subject, until, both as individuals and in their associated capacity, they grant our request, and go with their whole soul into our movement, in direct opposition to all drinking habits. Then, and not till then, will we be in possession of power sufficient to deliver our nation from the curse of the traffic. And why should we despair of ultimate success? Our success in the past augurs well for the future. Let us thank God and take courage, and trust that the day will come when every Christian shall be an abstainer, and every Christian congregation a society of abstainers. We do love to contemplate the subject in this light, because it is the only hope we have of ever being able so to influence the legislature as to get it not only to withdraw all legal sanction from the traffic, but secure its destruction.

It is very likely I shall be told that if Prohibition is not obtained until what we have referred to is realized, it never will. My reply is, that unless something very near what I have referred to be realized, a prohibitory law would be of no avail. It is nothing short of a delusion, as I look at it, to expect that a law prohibiting the making and selling of drink will ever be put upon the statute-book of this country, or, were it there, that it would be respected, so long as the great majority of the people believe drink to be a very good thing. I most firmly believe that to be a sound prohibitionist, one that can be trusted, you must first be sound on the Abstinence question—a believer in the doctrine that the evil is in the drink. I do not more firmly believe that Ahasuerus did wrong in sending forth the decree suggested by Haman, than that it is wrong on the

part of the legislature to legalize the drink-traffic; and I believe it was not more the duty of the king, at the request of Esther, to counteract the decree that had been sent forth, than it is the duty of the legislature to prohibit that traffic. Here, however, the analogy ends. The will of Ahasuerus was absolute throughout his entire empire; here, and now, no such absolute power exists, except with the people. It is with them, especially as regards social habits, that it is to be found. How far, then, can a government like ours prohibit the traffic? Just so far as, and no farther than, the people choose. And so long as the great mass of those who constitute the Church, and whom parliament represents, continue to drink, I have no hope that a prohibitory law will be put upon our statute-book. But what, it may be asked, will be the result if those who at present constitute the Church continue to plead excuses, and refuse to interfere in the only probable way by which this curse can be removed from our nation?

This leads me to call attention to another lesson taught in the message of Mordecai to Esther, viz.,—that God will, with or without us, fulfil all his purposes. The Jews would have been delivered whether Esther interfered or not. “If thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance rise to the Jews from another place.” We need not trouble ourselves by conjecturing from what other quarter deliverance would have come, had Esther not interfered. God’s power is unlimited. It is sufficient for our purpose to notice that Esther was distinctly informed, that if she refused the opportunity afforded her to co-operate with God, his purposes in reference to the Jews would nevertheless be fulfilled.

What was true then is equally so now. If I am as correct in my belief that the purpose of God is, that this great stumbling-block, the drink-system, shall be removed, as Mordecai was that the Jews should be delivered, then am I justified in saying to all those who have hitherto refused to interfere to that end—“If you altogether hold your peace at this time, do not imagine that the work shall stop for want of workers—

enlargement and deliverance from such a curse will rise from another place." When God has work to do, and when those whose special duty it is to undertake and accomplish it, stand aloof and plead excuses for non-interference, workers will be found elsewhere. I cannot help thinking that a remarkable illustration of this was given thirty years ago, when the Temperance movement was inaugurated. It was made evident to all that the drink-system had produced results in our country alike inimical to the propagation of the Gospel and the growth of grace amongst us. Who then of all others were specially called upon to cut all connection with it, and set about accomplishing its overthrow? Most assuredly the Church as such. But did she gird herself for the work? No, verily not; she continued to be, what she still is, the party of all others which throws around the murderous system the brightest halo of respectability and sacredness. In these circumstances, then, was the system allowed to go unexposed and unopposed? No! God raised up men unknown to fame, who went forth to the hedges and the highways, and cried with a bitter cry against it; and their call has been responded to by hundreds of ministers, and thousands of private Christians, entering into combinations outside the Church for the very purpose of performing the work the Church herself ought to have undertaken. And thus do we apprehend will the response continue, until the little leaven shall have leavened the whole lump, when the Church, clothed in her royal robes, shall bend her whole power against the system, and be the principal agent in bringing it to an end.

The work must be done, and done by Christian men and women, though many of them in the present day may refuse to interfere. When the children of Israel went down to Egypt, it was God's purpose that they should return to Canaan. But of those who left Egypt, only two entered the promised land. All others, because of their unbelief, fell in the wilderness. Even Moses and Aaron, and other good men, were not permitted to enter. Nevertheless, God's purpose was accomplished. While the fathers fell, the children entered and took

possession. So do I believe will it be with the Church of the present day. Because of her rejection of the Temperance movement, and the sympathy she has hitherto shown to the drink-system, she has been doomed to many weary wanderings in the arid desert of drinking and drunkenness, and therefore cannot in that condition be allowed to enter the Canaan of a true temperance rest. Into that rest, however, sooner or later she must enter. If her present leaders refuse to embrace the opportunity afforded them of assisting her thither, they will be taken out of the way, and young Joshuas may be raised up, who will ultimately lead the whole host of the Lord away from the slavery of drinkdom into the land of temperance freedom. And then, with clean hands and garments unstained by the pollutions of drink, they will demand, with a voice not to be resisted by any government, whether conservative or radical, that the drink-traffic cease and determine. Present appearances encourage hope in this direction; but let us not be high-minded, but fear. The fate of the Church of Thyatira may be that of the Church in Britain; and Asia, or Africa, or the Continent of Europe, lighted up by the Sun of Righteousness, may at some future time have to do for Britain that which the Church within her own borders refused to do. May the dark places of the earth soon be lighted up! Humanly speaking, this would be all the sooner accomplished were those who constitute the Church at home to free themselves from the drink-system. May grace be given to nerve them for the work!

And now, lastly, there is still another lesson taught us in this message of Mordecai, which we must not overlook. It is, that our having the promise of God that a certain end shall be accomplished, is no reason for slothfulness. Mordecai was perfectly satisfied that the Jews would be delivered. He had not the slightest doubt about it. Hear how confidently he speaks,—“If thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, *then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place.*” Still, notwithstanding his confidence that the Jews would be delivered out of the hands of Haman,

whether Esther interfered or not on their behalf, he did not sit down and fold his hands in idleness. On the contrary, he is up and at the work, and working with all his might, just as if their deliverance had altogether depended upon the diligence with which he wrought. Now, the nearer we imitate Mordecai's conduct, the more will we act as becometh Christians. We have promises given that certain ends shall yet be accomplished,—for instance, the heathen are to be given to Christ for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; but we never for a moment, in these days, entertain the idea expressed in the sentence once addressed to *Carey*, when he was pleading the cause of missions in the hearing of some of his brethern,—“Sit down, my man, when God wants to convert the heathen, he will do that without you or I interfering.” No; the very fact of there being such a promise, combined with the command to “preach the Gospel to every creature,” is the greatest encouragement and the most powerful reason why we should work, as if that end were to be gained by our working alone.

We have also the promise that every stumbling-block that is in the way of the fulfilment of the promise of the Father to the Son shall be removed; and we know that, among the class to which it belongs, there is no stumbling-block so great and formidable as the drink-system. Thus, we have the same good reason for believing that it will be removed as Mordecai had that the Jews would be delivered. Let us see to it, then, that like him, not only our faith in ultimate triumph be firm, but that we be up and at the work as if victory wholly depended upon our efforts. It is most important that, as Temperance reformers, we should have firm faith in our principles and their ultimate triumph. Unless we have that, there exists a strong temptation to get weary in the work, and quietly to slip out of it altogether, if not to join in the cry that it is a failure. And it is equally important that we should prove our faith in ultimate success by working. There are not a few even among abstainers who will tell you how confident they are that every stumbling-block, and of course

the drink-system among others, will be removed, and whose faith in this (to hear them speak) is as firm as that of Mordecai's that the Jews should be delivered, but their works are far deficient. They are seldom or never seen at a temperance meeting, and really take very little or no interest in the movement. Now, this is far from commendable conduct. If we are correct in thinking that we have a sure guarantee in the Word of God that the drink-system shall sooner or later be brought to a perpetual end, then in that we have the most powerful reason and encouragement, instead of indulging in sloth, to be up and at the work with all our might. As we are not to sin because grace abounds, neither must we be slothful because we have the promise that a certain end shall be gained. I know there are men who profess to believe that the overthrow of the drink-system is impossible; that there has been drinking from the beginning, and that there will be drinking to the end. My reply to such is, that if the system be bad against which we fight, no matter what be its power or prestige, we ought to have no such word in our vocabulary as—impossible. What we have rather to do is, to hold fast the promise, that the worm Jacob shall beat the mountain small as dust; that one shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.

What, then, is the principal work to which, as Temperance reformers, we ought to bind ourselves? To secure the sympathy and practical support of all our churches; to get our brethren of every denomination to wash their hands from having any connection with the drink-system; and then to seek its overthrow by any lawful means they choose. I consider it, however, impertinent presumption on the part of any to dun Government for a prohibitory law, while their own cellars are filled with drink, and their private tables, as well as those around which they sit at ordination-dinners, and on other public occasions, groan under it.

If we cannot present motives sufficiently powerful to influence Christian people to prohibit the traffic within the boundaries over which they have control, where are we to find

motives sufficient to prevail with the Chancellor of the Exchequer?

What has been done by certain churches, and by thousands of individuals and families in other churches, can be done by the whole Christian community. They have all the power to let drink alone. And when they have done what they can, they will be able with good grace, and with hopes of success, to ask Government to put the drink out of the way of the weak and wavering, the vicious and the drunken.

There were two motives Mordecai presented to Esther to get her to do her duty; and having referred to these, I shall conclude.

The first motive was self-preservation. There was no chance of safety for Esther except in doing as Mordecai requested. There is no security against being overtaken with drunkenness so long as drink is tampered with; and so long as Christians tamper with the drink, so long will the Church have to deal with cases of drunkenness. We plead with you, for your own safety, to let the drink alone. Do not say there is no fear of you. Remember that men of greater intellect and moral fortitude, and deeper-toned piety than you possess, have fallen before the deceptive foe. Do then, for your own sake, be persuaded fully to realize your position, and go with all your heart into this movement, in opposition to all the laws of drinking.

The second motive presented was for the sake of her father's house. This was the sharpest arrow in the quiver of Mordecai: it went direct to the Queen's heart, and touched the tenderest chord there, and awoke in her soul all the sacred associations connected with her father's house. As she thought of that house, with its hallowed memories, her soul was stirred within her, and she cried out in her agony, "How can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred! I will go in unto his presence, and if I perish, I perish." "If I perish"—as if she had said, "I will perish making an effort, under my father's God, to save my father's house: for how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?"

If, then, reader, you will not for your own sake, will you not for the sake of your father's house? If not for your own, will you not for the sake of a rising generation? Will you not for the sake of God and your country? Will you not for the sake of the cause of Him who loved you so as to die for you? Once more, will you not, for the sake of all these combined, be persuaded to put on, by the hand of faith, your royal robes anew—robes more pure, more glorious than ever adorned Queen Esther; and in dependence upon Him who provided and bestowed them upon you, go heart and soul into the Temperance movement, there to work and pray, and pray and work, doubting not its ultimate triumph?

“For right is right, since God is God,
And right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin.”

THE WINE OF CANA.

(A REPRINT.)

RECOMMENDATIONS.

(From the REV. WILLIAM REID, *Edinburgh.*)

"For ourselves we do not hesitate to say, that it is the most able and satisfactory discussion of this very important passage of Scripture with which we have met, and as such we cordially commend it to the consideration of both the friends and opponents of our cause."

(From the REV. PETER MEARNS, *Coldstream.*)

"This vigorously written lecture deserves the wide circulation it has attained. Concurring with the writer in his opinion that the wine miraculously produced by our Saviour at Cana was unintoxicating, we have read with much pleasure his ably-conducted argument in favour of this opinion; and, without endorsing every statement, we deem it well fitted to carry conviction to the mind of the reader."

"Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now."—JOHN ii. 10.

THERE are very few things that have ever been discussed among men in reference to which they all agree. That such should be the case is not at all surprising, if we take into account the different constitution of different minds, the different trainings they have passed through, and the different stand-points from which different men view the same object. When these things are taken into account, there appears to be no reason for surprise at the diversity of opinion that obtains in the human family. Among many things that have been discussed of late years, temperance has come in for a fair share; and while all have admitted very frankly that temperance is good, there have been great diversities of opinion as to what constitutes it, more especially in reference to the use of

alcoholics. One party has argued most strenuously that the moderate dietetic use of intoxicating drink constitutes *that* "temperance" against which Paul says, in writing to the Galatians, there is "no law." The definition of temperance given by this party would be quite unexceptionable "if alcoholics had a *lawful* relation to the (healthy) human frame." But this is denied by another party, who argue that there is no such "*lawful* relation," and that, therefore, the man who would practise temperance ought to abstain from the dietetic use of such drink. Against this view the first party object, and triumphantly refer to the account given (in the second chapter of John) of the miracle our Lord wrought at the marriage of Cana in Galilee. Assuming that the wine there produced by miraculous power, and used, was alcoholic, they consider the definition of temperance given by their opponents completely upset. So it would be if they could prove what they assume; but they have never yet done so. We therefore purpose, in the following pages, to lay before the reader our reasons for believing that the Temperance movement of the present day, and the definition given of temperance by the leaders of that movement, are in harmony with the design of this miracle.

First, we shall inquire,—What was the end the Saviour had in view in working this miracle?

Second,—What, in all probability, was the kind of wine produced?

We wish to discuss the subject in this order, because we believe that the end our Lord had in view in all he did is more binding, more obligatory upon his followers than are those mere customs to which he conformed. While we would never lose sight of aught he did, yet we feel quite satisfied that it is the end he had in view that is particularly binding upon us, and ought to receive our special attention. If this opinion be correct, it follows that, if we can ascertain what his great object was in working this miracle, we will be the better able to judge (independent of the nature of the wine produced) whether, by supporting the drinking customs of our country, or seeking their abolition, we shall be doing most to further the object he contemplated.

In the *First place*, then, WHAT WAS THE ONE GRAND END HE HAD IN VIEW IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THIS MIRACLE? It is distinctly stated, that "this beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory." Now, we venture to assume, what no Bible-believer will call in question, that, in manifesting forth his own glory, he manifested forth the glory of him whose servant he was on that

occasion. Indeed, the whole teaching of the Bible goes to prove that this was the grand object he had in view in becoming an infant of days, and throughout all his sojourn as "a man of sorrows." So much was this the case, that he could say, addressing his Father—"Father, I have glorified thee on the earth, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was;" and his Father, on two occasions, was heard to say of him—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

It is scarcely necessary that I should remind the reader that it was for the same great end that he and I were sent into the world, and that we fulfil the end of our mission just in proportion as we imitate the conduct of our Saviour. But we should do well to bear in mind, that while Jesus is the great exemplar after whom we are to walk, he did many things which are by no means binding upon his followers. Who ever thought of arguing, that because Jesus could say—"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head," all his followers should choose the same condition? and yet it appears to us that there is just as much reason in arguing thus as there is for the dietetic use of what we call wine, because it is said that Jesus in the first miracle he performed produced a material designated by that term. We readily grant that circumstances may sometimes be such that we must submit cheerfully to the "spoiling of our goods," and at once become sons of poverty, and be constrained to say—"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but we have not a pillow upon which to lay our wearied head;" for "he that is not prepared to leave father and mother, houses and lands, for Christ's sake, is not worthy to be called his disciple." Yet, on the other hand, if the great object he had in view in working this miracle can be carried out by us, while we possess a house we can call our own, and a pillow upon which to lay our head, it is perfectly right—perfectly in harmony with God's will—that we should enjoy such things, although the circumstances of the Son of Man were very different. The moment, however, such things become a hinderance to us, in gaining the end Jesus had in view in working this miracle, we are bound to part with them. We had a pretty good illustration given us some time ago, in Scotland, of the principle above referred to, when some hundreds of ministers left the temporalities they had long enjoyed. And why? Not because they thought it wrong in the abstract to retain them. Whatever other parties might do, they entertained no such idea, but the very reverse. Why, then,

did they yield up what they believed they had a perfect right to retain? Because they believed, on the other hand, that from the circumstances in which they were placed (whether they were right or wrong matters not to my argument), they could not retain such things and promote the end Jesus had in view in working this miracle; and because they thought so, they walked out, and left all such temporalities behind, and presented a glorious testimony to the world in behalf of what they believed to be the truth. Well, then, in reference to the wine spoken of at the marriage feast of Cana, I should say it is not necessary to prove that it was not alcoholic, nor to settle the question whether it had or had not a "lawful relation to the human frame,"—it is quite sufficient if it can be proved that the dietetic use of the wines of our day is subversive of the very end Jesus had in view in working such a miracle; then, whatever effort it may cost us to withstand the conventional usages of society, and however much self-denial may be required to resist the craving of an acquired appetite, we are bound to resist it, just as much so as we should be bound to leave father and mother, houses and lands, if any or all of these stood in our way in seeking to further the glory of God. The grand point, then, for every man to settle between God and himself is, whether, by abolishing altogether the use of alcoholic drinks as articles of diet or common beverages, or by supporting and countenancing their use, most would be done to further the object Jesus had in view when he performed this miracle.

Perhaps the reader might be assisted in settling this point were we to notice a few ways by which God's glory was manifested in the working of this miracle. We will do so.

In the *first place*, *God's glory was manifested in the working of this miracle, inasmuch as the attention of the whole company was thereby turned to Jesus.* And when is God more glorified than when this is done? And what ought to be the grand object of every Christian, but just to direct the attention of others to the Saviour? We cannot suppose that anything short of this would be the result of this miracle. No sooner would the fact that Jesus had turned water into wine be made known to the company, than every eye would be turned towards him—every one would be talking to his neighbour about him. It certainly will be admitted by every Christian that it is always a hopeful sign when the attention of wayward sinners is turned to the Saviour, and that whatever stands as a hinderance to that end being obtained ought to receive no favour, no patronage, from those who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. How, then, does it stand with the spirit-

traffic, and the drinking customs associated with it? Why, if there is one thing more than another that turns the attention of men away from all that is "honest, lovely, and of good report," to all that is low, debasing, and demoralizing, it is the "drinking system" of our country. The thing is now so notorious that any attempt to prove it is superfluous. What is there with which ministers and others have to contend which so completely baffles their every attempt in directing the attention of the masses to the Saviour, as the drinking customs and the spirit-traffic? And yet, notwithstanding the notoriety of this, it does appear somewhat strange that so many, whose daily prayer is, "Thy kingdom come," should not only patronize such a system, but justify themselves in doing so, by referring us to the conduct of Jesus at the marriage feast at Cana of Galilee. Surely we may presume that the Immaculate One never could have done anything whereby any man could be justified in countenancing and supporting a system whose whole tendency is to turn away the thoughts of men from himself.

But the question may very properly be raised,—Have we any reason to believe that, in the event of the spirit-traffic and drinking customs being abolished, the attention of sinners would be more generally and earnestly turned to God than it is under present circumstances? All experience authorizes us in expecting that such would be the case. Williams, the missionary, lamented the introduction of ardent spirits into Raiatea, and the rapid spread of drunkenness. "The evil," he says, "had become so alarming that the missionaries felt that something must be attempted, and therefore determined to set the people an example, by abstaining entirely from the use of ardent spirits, and by forming temperance societies. These worked exceedingly well. . . . The people, with their chief, have been brought to see their folly, and abandon the use of that which was unfitting them for earth and heaven, by rendering them poor, profligate, and miserable." And the same thing, we believe, holds good in our country. It is in harmony with our own experience, and, we believe, with that of all who have turned their attention to the subject, that if you get a man to forsake the way to the spirit-shop, as a general rule, he will find his way to the house of God. Many are the instances that we have met with of men who bless the day that ever abstinence was brought under their consideration, because through its instrumentality they had been arrested in their downward course, and were induced to hear the Gospel of him who came to seek and save the lost.

We now observe, *secondly*,—*That by the working of this*

miracle the glory of God was manifested, inasmuch as the faith of the disciples was confirmed, and thereby their Christian steadfastness secured. We are informed that "his disciples believed on him." This was another important end gained. Jesus had come to do a great work; when that was finished, it was "to be made known to every creature," and that, too, through human instrumentality. At the marriage of Cana we find him along with his disciples, and when there, he gave them a most convincing proof that he was all he claimed to be, by exercising his miraculous power in turning water into wine. And such an exercise of his power was not lost upon them. No sooner were they made aware of what their Master had done, than they were more than ever confirmed in their belief that he was none other than the promised Messiah—the Sent of God. Now, is it for this purpose that so many professed Christian people patronize the spirit-traffic? From all that is known of such a system, is it possible that any man can "be fully persuaded in his own mind," that by indulging in the dietetic use of intoxicating drinks, and thereby supporting the drink-system, he is patronizing what is adapted to confirm and establish the faith of those to whom the churches of our country give the right hand of fellowship? We cannot believe it possible that any honest man can arrive at such a persuasion, more especially when the fact is obvious that, instead of such a practice having a tendency to confirm the faith of what has been called "the sacramental host of God's elect," it is the grand cause, either directly or indirectly, of by far the greater part of that stumbling and falling that is daily taking place in it. On the other hand, have we any reason to believe that the entire discountenancing of the drinking customs would have any tendency to confirm the faith of those who profess belief in Jesus? We have a deep conviction that such would be the case. In the first place, by adopting and acting out such a policy a great temptation to evil would be avoided; and "it is good," said Dr. Chalmers, "to shun the first approaches to evil, and not only not to touch the unclean thing, but to keep our eyes from viewing vanity. Give me to deny all worldly lusts; let me ever, when duty and circumstances allow, shun rather than brave the encounter." Now, we think that it is capable of proof, that to secure the progress of religion in the soul, the safest way is to shun rather than brave the drinking customs of society, because apart altogether from the danger there exists of acquiring the drunkard's appetite, the very act of yielding to such customs (as a general rule) must, from the nature of the thing, prove injurious rather than otherwise to religion in the

soul of man. But the abstainer not only escapes all such danger; his abstinence introduces him in general to a more favourable position for acquiring that knowledge by which alone his faith in God can be confirmed and established.

In the *third place*, *The glory of God was manifested by the working of this miracle, inasmuch as Jesus promoted the comfort and happiness of those present at the feast.*

If it be a duty binding upon the disciples of Jesus that they use every legitimate means within their power of "undoing the heavy burthens," letting "the oppressed go free," breaking every yoke, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and bidding the orphan be blessed with their abundance, and so fulfil in one way the end accomplished by him in working this miracle, the question to be settled is, Are these drinking customs, which the great majority of them patronize, in any way calculated to provide for the wants of God's creatures—to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, or undo heavy burthens? It does not need to be proved that the very reverse is the case. It is a notorious fact, that upon the altar of these customs there is sacrificed every year the food of six or seven millions of the people, at the enormous cost of sixty or seventy millions sterling, and that they are the producers of three-fourths of all the pauperism in the country, entailing upon the community burthens grievous to be borne, together with other evils that are too numerous to be mentioned, but which have entered more or less into almost every family circle. Yet notwithstanding all this, these customs continue to be supported by the great majority of church-going people; while the plea urged by many as a justification of their conduct, when stripped of all its gilding, amounts to the following:—Jesus at the marriage feast of Cana of Galilee, in order to provide for the wants of his creatures, by miraculous power turned water into wine; therefore *we* are quite justified in supporting and countenancing "a rag-manufacturing, pauper-producing, disease-engendering custom." If such logic as this, in the mouth of a professed disciple of Jesus, be not out of its proper place, then there is no disorder or confusion in this world!

While the drinking customs of our country are proving so subversive of the best interests of the people, would abstinence from these customs have any tendency to promote their well-being? To prove that such would be the case, we are happily under no necessity to enter upon a long train of argument. We can appeal to facts. We are personally acquainted with hundreds who can say—many of them, indeed, have said in our hearing—"that they were hungry, and it fed them; naked, and

it clothed them; without a house, and it gave them one that they can now call their own." The truth is, there is scarcely a town or village in Scotland where facts cannot be appealed to as proof that total abstinence from all intoxicants does, less or more, for men what Jesus did by miracle at Cana—provide for their wants.

We now proceed, *in the Second place*, to inquire WHETHER ABSTINENCE BE NOT IN EQUAL HARMONY WITH THE MIRACLE ITSELF? OR, IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT IN ALL PROBABILITY WAS THE KIND OF WINE PRODUCED? Was it alcoholic, or otherwise? We claim the liberty of stating at once, that, in our opinion, it was not alcoholic. But before giving our reasons for such an opinion, there are two or three preliminary remarks we have to offer.

In the first place, there is no necessity for concluding that the liquor produced by miracle, and used, was intoxicating, because it is called wine. Many are in danger of leaping to this conclusion when the term "wine" is met with. This is a grand (may I not say, without any breach of charity), in many cases a wilful mistake. What would those who reason in this way say of the man who should argue that, because all the "trees" he had ever met with were pine trees, therefore whenever tree is mentioned in history, it must refer to one or other of that species? They would laugh at the argument, if not at the man who used it; and yet it is just their own. If we supply "wine" for "tree," we will at once see the similarity of the reasoning: "All the kinds of wine we have ever met with have been less or more intoxicating—*ergo*, everything, in every age and country, called wine, must have been of the same nature." This is at least a very summary, if not a very satisfactory way of arriving at conclusions. Did it never occur to the minds of those who reason in this way, that the term "wine," in ancient times, among the Jews and others, like the term "tree," might be a generic term, applied to substances having less in common with each other than any one tree could have with another? and, moreover, Did it never occur to them that the meaning and application of words change very materially in the lapse of ages? Many illustrations of this might be given were it necessary. Let one suffice:—The term *tyrant*, in olden times, was applied to every man that filled a throne, irrespective of his character; but in our day the meaning and application of that term is altogether changed. It is no longer in our day what it once was—a generic term; it is now applied only to despotic, cruel kings; but because this is the case, it would be very far wrong to conclude that all to whom this term has been applied were cruel and despotic.

Now, we apprehend that the term "wine," like "tyrant," was in ancient times a generic one, and that it was applied to what would intoxicate as well as to what would not; but in our day and country the case is very different: whenever the term "wine" is mentioned, it is understood to refer to what intoxicates; indeed, among the great mass of the people such a term is not considered applicable to anything else. But because this is the case, we are under no necessity of concluding that everything in every age to which it has been applied was of the same nature. I apprehend there is no need to prove that in ancient as well as in modern times the term "wine" was applied to that which would intoxicate. This is admitted by all to have been the case; but it is by no means so universally believed that it was frequently applied to what could not intoxicate. That such was the case is capable of proof. The Rev. Wm. Ritchie, of Dunse, well-known as a sound interpreter, in a masterly pamphlet, entitled, *Scripture Testimony against Intoxicating Wine*, ably following in the track of others,* proves that in our translation of the Bible the term "wine," in more than forty instances, refers to "*the produce of the vine in the solid form of grapes*," &c., and not to a liquid at all. Take a few examples:—"The new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it." Here the term is applied to the grape in the cluster, which we know was not intoxicating. "They shall gather their wine and summer fruits." Now, what is said here to be gathered is called wine, and what they gathered was just the produce of the vineyard; and it is certain that such possesses no intoxicating properties more than other fruits of the earth; and yet it is called wine,—"*They shall gather their wine*." We recollect of once being told, with great gravity, by a gentleman who had received a superior education, that all we were to understand from the above passage was, that what they gathered was called wine, not because it was so, but because out of what they gathered they could make wine. We replied, that if such was the case we might with propriety say, when we saw the farmer gathering in his barley, that he was gathering in his ale and whisky, because out of what he gathered he could make these; or, when the gardener gathered in his apples, that he was gathering in his cider. We reject, with due deference, all such expositions as being arbitrary and uncalled for, and choose rather to believe that the sacred writer meant what he said, and said what he meant. "He

* *Tirosh to Yayin*; Works of Dr. Lees—Temperance Division; and the *Olive, Vine, and Palm*, by the Rev. P. Mearns.

shall wash his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes." This is a Hebrew parallelism. In the first clause of the sentence we have garments, which, in the second, is rendered clothes,—the two terms refer to one and the same thing,—so in reference to "wine" and "blood of grapes." Here, then, we have the blood of grapes called wine; and every one might know that it will not intoxicate. We read of the mountains dropping down "sweet wine" and "new wine;" the sacred writers, we have no doubt, referring to an abundant vintage, when the luscious juice of the grape might have been seen bursting its natural bottle, and in all its richness dropping down upon the mountain side, and as it dropped down it is called wine. We might adduce many more illustrations of the term "wine" having been applied to what would not intoxicate; but we forbear, believing that we have given sufficient to establish our position that there is no necessity for believing that what was produced and used at Cana was intoxicating, because it was called wine, inasmuch as that term was applicable to what would not intoxicate.

There is another conclusion we are very apt to arrive at, equally erroneous with the one referred to—viz., that the ancients cultivated their vineyards with the view of making the produce into intoxicating wine. It is a grand mistake. They no more did so than we cultivate our fields with the view of making ale and whisky. The grand purpose we have in cultivating our land is, to produce food for man and beast. No doubt, in our folly, we make part of that produce into intoxicating drink; and although that part be large, it is small compared with what is applied to other purposes. The ancients cultivated their vineyards for the very purpose for which we cultivate our fields. No doubt, like us, they in many cases made part of the produce into intoxicating drink; but we believe that, when compared with the whole, it would only form a small part. An abundant vintage was to them what an abundant harvest is to us. The produce of their vineyard was to them what our wheat is to us—"not a luxury, but a necessary; not an intoxicating but a nutritive beverage." There were various ways in which they were in the habit of making use of the produce of the vineyard. We are informed that one very common way was (during the vintage season, which lasts about four months) to pluck the grapes from the tree, and use them along with bread. This is quite a common practice at the present day in vine-growing countries. Another method they had was to bake the grapes into what in our version is called flagons; hence we read, "Stay me with flagons," that is, *refresh me with cakes of grapes*. And King David, among

other things, gave each of his men a flagon of wine. Now, we are assured by Gesenius that a flagon was neither more nor less than a solid cake—a cake of grapes; and it is rendered so in the margin of some Bibles. However, by far the most common way of making use of the produce of their vineyards was the following:—Having provided presses, they gathered in their wine as it was found in the natural bottle, and pressed it out into vessels appointed to receive it; after which it was subjected to the action of fire, and boiled down to a certain consistency, in which condition it would keep for an indefinite length of time. This was what is called the inspissated or boiled wine of the Hebrews—a wine that was always held in high estimation among them, and which they were in the regular practice of using at their common meals and festivals, mingled with water, or along with milk. Hence we find the prophet Isaiah referring to this delicious mixture as a symbol of the rich provision God has made for poor lost sinners,—“Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, come buy *wine and milk* without money and without price.” And we read in the Song of Solomon,—“I have drunk my wine with my milk;” while Wisdom, in preparing her feast, is represented in the book of Proverbs as having “built her house,” and “hewn out her seven pillars,” and “killed her beasts.” But all that was not enough to constitute a feast among the Jews. Hence Wisdom, to complete her preparations, “*mingled her wine,*” and when all was ready she sent forth her maidens, and represented herself as inviting the guests to her feast, saying, “Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine WHICH I have mingled.” All this is, of course, highly figurative language; but we think there can be no doubt that it refers to the practice of the Jews in mingling their boiled wines with water and milk for their common meals, more especially for their feasts.

Let the reader bear in mind, then, that the term wine was applied to both intoxicating and non-intoxicating drink—that it was a generic term; and let it also be remembered, that while the Hebrews in many instances used the produce of their vineyards in a fermented or rotten state, and often when in that state mixed it with narcotics, yet they used it far more extensively in the sound, wholesome condition, by having it boiled, and mingling it with water and milk;—in this condition it was a regular article of diet among them. Keeping these two things before our mind, let us proceed to inquire, What, in all probability, was the kind of wine made and used at Cana? Was it alcoholic, or was it not? Before proceeding further, we at once admit, that, so far as direct

proof is concerned, we cannot tell. Neither the text nor context affords very decisive evidence upon the point. It is simply stated that the mother of Jesus said unto him, They have no wine, and that he, by miracle, produced what the governor of the feast considered to be the *best wine*; but whether the properties which entitled it to be called "the best" were *alcoholic* or *nutritive*, nothing positive is said. We are aware that there are men, great in learning as in piety, who believe it was alcoholic, and most assuredly they have as perfect a right to form and express their opinion as we have to express ours; but we are quite entitled to demand evidence from them; and so far as direct evidence is concerned, they have none. We assert it as our belief that it was not alcoholic, and we have as good a right to make an assertion from our mole-hill as they have from their mountain-top; and should they bow down and demand proof for what we assert (a thing they have a perfect right to do), we would look up, without fear of consequences, and honestly confess, as we have done, that we have none to give. What, then, is to be done? They have no direct proof, and we have none. There is what is called circumstantial evidence, that very often, in the absence of what is positive, indicates the truth pretty clearly; at all events, it is a kind of evidence frequently acted upon in matters pertaining to life and death. We apprehend that it is to this kind of evidence, in the discussion of the present subject, that both parties must have recourse, and the party who is able to produce the clearest and most powerful circumstantial evidence in support of his theory is the one entitled to the most favourable consideration.

Having made these preliminary remarks, we now proceed (with all deference) to state a few reasons why we believe the wine at the marriage of Cana was not alcoholic.

In the *first place*, *Taking into account the character of the parties who formed the principal guests at this marriage feast, and knowing something experimentally and otherwise of the nature and effect of alcoholic liquors upon the frame of man, we have always greatly doubted that the wine was intoxicating.* A marriage feast among the Jews lasted seven days, and it is considered that the miracle at Cana took place on the third or fourth day of the feast. Keeping these things in view, let us read over the text with the idea in our mind that the wine was alcoholic, and let us see if it is not calculated (all things considered) to raise a strong doubt as to the correctness of such an idea:—"Every man at the beginning doth set forth good (intoxicating) wine, and when men have well drunk, that which is worse (not so intoxicating); but thou hast kept the

best (most intoxicating) wine until now." According to this idea, we have brought before our notice a company who, for three or four days, had been drinking "well" of intoxicating wine, and the wine at the end of that time becoming exhausted, one of their number (Jesus) steps forward, and, by the exercise of his miraculous power, provides fifty or ninety gallons of that which was more intoxicating than what had been previously used. With the risk of being charged with employing strong language, we cannot help saying that such an idea appears to us as little short of blasphemy. The truth is, no Christian in a right state of heart and mind would venture to say that he would be justified in doing what such an interpretation represents Jesus as having done, and if the disciple feels conscious that his own heart would condemn him were he to do so, surely he should ponder well before he entertains an idea that implies upon the part of his Master conduct so questionable.

It is believed that the marriage feast took place some time after the vintage season: if so, it must have been preserved wine of one kind or other of which the guests partook. We have already reminded the reader that the boiled or inspissated wine, mingled with water or milk, was regularly used by the Jews as an article of diet or beverage at their common meals or feasts. This being the case, surely there is more presumptive evidence (all things considered) that this was the wine used, than there is that it was alcoholic. We have often in our imagination pictured the happy company coming together at every returning meal (perhaps as happy a company as ever met to celebrate a marriage feast), and partaking freely of what delicacies had been provided—drinking "well" of such wine, mingled with water, or used along with milk. And why not drink well of it? why not do honour to the festive board of their entertainers? why not partake freely of that which was every way adapted to meet and satisfy God-created appetites? This wine, however, became exhausted, from what reason we cannot tell. Some consider that it might be from the poverty of the entertainers; others, because more might have attended the feast than had been expected. Be that as it may, we are assured of the fact that it became exhausted, and thus an opportunity (speaking after the manner of man) was afforded Jesus of "manifesting forth the glory of God," which he at once embraced, and by miraculous power produced as rich and luscious a wine as ever he, as the God of nature, caused nature to produce. They had been using (we have supposed) the boiled or preserved wine, but now they receive it, as it were, in all its natural freshness. We can, therefore, perfectly

understand the governor when he says, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now."

In the absence, then, of direct proof on either side, we feel quite satisfied that the presumptive evidence in favour of its being a non-intoxicating beverage is far stronger than it is in favour of its being the liquor that bites like a serpent and stings like an adder.

In the second place, *We think there is strong presumptive evidence that the wine used previous to, as well as that produced by miracle, would possess the power of satisfying a natural appetite, without any tendency to create an artificial one.* In short, there is every reason for concluding that however different in appearance it might be to barley loaves and fishes, it did for the guests at the marriage feast just what these did for the multitude in the wilderness—satisfied a natural appetite. But on the supposition that it was alcoholic wine, then we fearlessly assert, and are quite prepared to stand by it, that just in proportion as it might possess alcohol, so in proportion was it destitute of the power of satisfying such an appetite: and it is now too notorious to require proof that alcohol, while destitute of the power of satisfying a natural appetite, tends to create an artificial one. Would that men would think of this, and beware how they tamper with a subtle poison, whose tendency is to create a craving which is more despotic than death, and more relentless than the grave! Where, then, is the evidence that when a number of Christ's creatures were in need of satisfying a natural appetite, he, by miracle, presented them with what was not only destitute of such power, but, on the contrary, possessed the power of originating a craving which might grow till every interest was sacrificed to its gratification? When parents are asked by their children for bread, will they give them a stone? or if they ask for an egg, will they give them a scorpion? When, then, a company of those whom Jesus came to save required pleasure and refreshment, would he give them that which is more insulting than the one, and more destructive than the other?

In the third place, *We would notice, that one thing that characterizes all the miracles of Jesus is, that they are in harmony with his divine mission, which was a mission of love.* We think the correctness of this remark will be admitted by at least all Christians; and we can very easily see how it holds good in reference to multiplying the loaves and fishes, to feeding the hungry, to giving sight to the blind, healing all manner of diseases, causing the lame to walk, &c.; but on the supposition that the wine produced at Cana was intoxicating, we

cannot so easily discover how that could be in harmony with a mission of love. On the supposition that a company had for three or four days been drinking well of intoxicating drink, we confess our inability to see how it could be in harmony with a mission of love to present such with fifty or ninety gallons of what was even more intoxicating than that they had been using. But we think there is every reason for believing that this miracle, as well as all the others, was in perfect harmony with his mission. And what, we would ask, could be more in harmony with a mission of love, than when a company of his creatures were in need of what was necessary to satisfy their natural wants, he should at once have supplied them with what was adapted to that end?—a thing which could only have been accomplished on the supposition that the wine was unintoxicating.

But again, we believe that Jesus, when represented as the “Rock of Ages,” is not more safe as a foundation upon which a sinner may build and feel secure, than he is safe as an example for the imitation of all his followers. But if it be correct, as some suppose, that by miracle he produced intoxicating wine, and used it, then I am bold to say that there are hundreds washing their “robes” in his blood, who, were they to attempt to imitate him in the use of alcoholic wine, would, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, make shipwreck of their hopes. What is more certain than that the reformed drunkard, if he attempt to use alcoholic drink, however moderately, will stumble and fall? Many are the instances we have known of such being advised to taste, and on yielding having relapsed into drunkenness. Teach the world that Jesus set the example of using alcoholic wine, and that, therefore, such a practice is right, and you hold up to every reformed drunkard an example which, if he attempt to imitate, will expose him to what may peril his soul’s salvation.

We are disposed to believe, however, that we are on the safer side when we conclude that the example of Jesus was such that any of his disciples might have imitated him with perfect safety. We do think there is strong presumptive evidence for concluding that he who knew the end from the beginning would not set the example of using that which could either create or awaken in his creatures a sinful appetite; so that we feel satisfied that had all the drunkards in our country been present at the marriage feast, and partaken of the wine produced, it would have had no more effect in rousing their appetite than if they had been in the wilderness with him, and partaken of the “loaves and fishes” that he multiplied by miracle.

The last thing that we will notice, *which affords to our mind circumstantial proof that at "Cana" the wine was not alcoholic, is the light which science has thrown upon the properties of alcohol, and the manner in which the Scriptures speak of intoxicating drink.*

We do not purpose, at present, even to give an epitome of what science teaches upon the subject, further than to say, that, for all dietetic purposes, it has been shown by such men as Dr. F. R. Lees, Professor Miller, Dr. Carpenter, Dr. C. Wilson, and others, that alcohol is just what Solomon stated it to be, a "mock" and deceiver. All we intend doing is very briefly to notice a few lessons that may be learned in reference to intoxicating drink from reading the Bible. In the first place, we have never, in all our reading, met with a single instance in that Book of God sanctioning the use of intoxicating drink, or speaking of it as a blessing. Even the very enemies of the temperance movement have never been able to produce such an instance, and, at this stage of our warfare, we venture to predict never will. We ask, then, does it not amount to something more than a mere probability that the "wine of Cana" would be of a harmless character?

But again, not only is the use of intoxicating drink never sanctioned by God, or represented in the Bible as a blessing; on the contrary, it is spoken of as a curse, and man is warned against it both by admonition and example: "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."—"It is not for kings to drink wine, lest they forget the law."—"Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink." These are but a mere sample of the texts found scattered throughout holy writ, from which there is emitted a burning blaze of holy indignation against the subtle thing, in the light of which we read the condemnation of its use as distinctly as if an angel had dipped his finger in the outspreading halo of God's glory, and written it athwart the blue vault of heaven. Surely we may conclude that it would not be "wine" of this nature, against which man is so solemnly warned by the Holy Spirit, that Jesus would present to his friends and entertainers.

But again, we are not only warned against such drink in plain language, but in the symbolic teaching of the Bible we are taught its nature, and the relation it sustains to our frames, and the danger of tampering with it. This method of teaching has always been a favourite one. In order, however, that it may be effective, it is necessary that the physical properties of the symbol possess an aptitude to symbolize the thing

intended: without this, nothing could be learned from such teaching. For instance, what is poison to the body could not represent food for the soul; a bed of roses could not symbolize a suffering condition; nor yet a pillow full of thorns a happy state. There must be an aptitude in the figure to represent what is intended. It will be conceded, we think, by all Bible believers, that the sacred writers would use no figures but what possessed this aptitude. Let us give one or two specimens from their writings—"Your enemy, the devil, goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." How apt the figure to convey to our mind an impression of the dangerous and destructive character of the Prince of all Evil! But again, the devil is represented under the figure of a serpent; from which we learn the lesson that he is morally bad, low, cunning, deceitful, dangerous, destructive of our best interests. And why do we learn such a lesson? Because of what we know of the character of the serpent, and the danger to which we know our life would be exposed by the bite of such a creature.

Now, while we are taught the character and the design of the Prince of Evil by such symbols as we have noticed, by what figures, let me ask, do the sacred writers convey to our mind an impression of the nature of intoxicating drink? We mention two—"the serpent's bite" and "the adder's sting." Here we have the same figure used to teach us the nature of such drink as is used to teach us the character of the devil. Why, then, shun the latter and embrace the former? or, rather, why not shun both, as such teaching evidently intends we should? We recollect once being charged by a minister with disingenuity when speaking on this part of our subject. He reminded us that it was only at the "last," when men had become victims to such drinks, that they were represented as producing effects similar to the serpent's bite and the adder's sting; and while he admitted that such language evidently taught the necessity of using such drinks with great caution, he did not think that we had a right to infer from it that we were to abstain altogether. With all due deference to those who may agree with this gentleman, we consider that in the very fact that it is at the "last," and not at the first, these drinks bite like a serpent and sting like an adder, we have a powerful reason why we should never taste them at all. Were it the case that a glass of such drinks produced instantaneously on the body of man effects similar to what would be produced by the bite of a serpent or sting of an adder, then no person henceforth would ever taste them; but the fact that at the first their effect is pleasant makes them all the more dangerous. But apart from this, we observed to the gentle-

man referred to, that we were quite willing to leave the matter in the hand of the sacred writer to decide whether he or we were right in the inference we drew from this passage. Let the sacred penman speak for himself: and what says he? "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright; for at last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." It is all in vain to try to get away from this passage by arguing that it is the excessive use of what is spoken of from which we are to abstain. "It is," to use the words of the Rev. William Ritchie, "the prompting of desire after the inebriating beverage: 'Look not on the wine'—avoid its enticements—abstain from it." And why? Because of the power it possesses of doing for you "at last" what the serpent's bite and adder's sting—though appropriate—are but faint figures to represent. Is it too much then to presume that the "wine" which the Spirit of God symbolizes by the serpent's bite and adder's sting would not be the kind used and produced by miracle at the marriage of Cana?

But again, intoxicating drinks are symbolized by the figure of a derider, falsifier, and counterfeit—one that assumes a character he never possessed, and promises what he can never perform. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Such is the character given by the Wise Man to intoxicating drinks, and we make bold to say that the Prince of Evil has not better sustained his character as a liar than they have done theirs as mockers and deceivers. These drinks are used as a beverage, while they have no power to quench thirst, except in so far as they contain water. They are used to give strength, and they are equally incapable of that. In cold climates they are used to raise the temperature of the body, and their effects, under such circumstances, are the very reverse. They are used in warm climates to lower the temperature of the body, and then they raise it. A glass is recommended after dinner to assist digestion, and their very nature is to harden the food, and not dissolve it. In short, in every case they sustain the character Solomon gave them; but the great evil is that he is not believed; men turn round, even Bible-believing men, and in the very face of what the inspired writer has said, they recommend these drinks as good creatures of God—good for this and that—good on every occasion, from the cradle to the grave—good in every climate, from the torrid zone to the frigid—and thus the grand delusion that these drinks are "good" is perpetuated. But still, upon the pillar of inspiration, in the midst of all such practical unbelief, there stands, written in characters never to be ob-

literated, "Wine is a mocker;" while science, from her temple, echoes, "Wine is a mocker;" and premature age, with hoary experience, adds a sorrowful "Amen." Does not this three-fold testimony afford presumptive proof that such could not be the wine produced at Cana? We think it does. The wine there, we apprehend, would stand in a very different relation to man than that of "mocker and deceiver"—"the serpent's bite" or "adder's sting."

In reading the Bible we not only find no sanction given by God to the use of intoxicating drinks; we not only find man solemnly warned against them, both by admonition and example; we find not only their evil tendency brought before us by symbolical teaching, but throughout the Bible we find that those who abstained from them are always represented as the fattest, fairest, and most healthy of the people; and such is the case to the present day. Among the people who abstain (other things being equal) there is less disease and mortality than among those who do not. And, moreover, we find that when God resolved to deliver his people out of the hands of the Philistines through the instrumentality of one man, He enjoined upon the parents of the coming hero, as well as upon the hero himself, entire abstinence. Yes, Samson, "Jehorah's nursling, the miracle of men," was about to be raised up to do a great work; that work would require a clear head and great physical power, and in order that he might possess these qualities, it was necessary that he and his parents should attend to the organic laws of life. Manoah and his wife could not be expected to have been so well acquainted with these laws as men in our day. Accordingly, an angel is sent from heaven with a message to them, which, among other things, contained a brief physiological lecture: "Beware (said the angel), and drink neither wine nor strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing;" and as if he had said, there being substances in common use bearing the same name, although very different in their nature and effect, lest you should be deceived, I have further to enjoin that you partake of nothing that comes of the vine, "for the son that thou shalt bear shall be a Nazarite unto the Lord from his mother's womb, *therefore* shall he do a great work." That work will require a clear intellect and great physical strength; let me therefore enjoin upon you a second time, "Beware and drink neither wine nor strong drink." It will not do to argue that Samson's great strength was the result of miracle. No doubt there was miracle; but we ought not to forget that God does not work miracles so long as the natural or human instrumentality can do the work. Of the truth of this we have a striking illustration at the marriage in Cana. There was no

absolute need, in order to produce the wine, that the servants should have filled the waterpots with water; but, so far as the natural and human instrumentality could be made available in the production of the wine, they were so; the water was at hand, and so were the servants—and “Jesus saith unto the servants, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim,” when

“The modest water, awed by power divine,
Beheld its God, and reddened into wine.”

Just so in reference to Samson; it was only after the natural had done all it could do; or, in other words, it was only after all necessary antecedents to the full development of physical powers had been attended to by him and his parents, that God, at the time when circumstances required, communicated to him strength by miracle.

Thus we find Jesus (for the angel that appeared to Manoah and his wife was none other than he), in preparing Samson for his work, enjoining upon him abstinence from intoxicating drinks. More than a thousand years roll past, and again Jesus appears on earth—not in the character of an angel, but as a man. He came, on this occasion, to make preparation, not for delivering his people out of the hand of such despots as the Philistines, but a guilty and enslaved world out of the hand of Satan. When the work necessary to this was accomplished at Jerusalem, it was to be made known to “every creature” through human instrumentality; and as Samson had to be prepared for his work, so must others for this. Jesus, therefore, selects the men, takes them under his own care, and gives them line upon line, precept upon precept, as they were able to bear it—all preparing or fitting them for the work which ultimately they performed with true Christian heroism.

Now, is it at all probable that he who, in order to prepare Samson for his work, enjoined abstinence upon him, would, now that he was preparing men for the performance of a far purer and more glorious work—one requiring physical endurance and suffering, as well as caution, kindness, vigilance, perseverance—teach them the reverse, by producing, miraculously, intoxicating wine—what he had enjoined Samson to abstain from, and what he, by the mouth of his servants, had warned man against in every possible way? BELIEVE THIS WHO MAY, WE CANNOT.

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